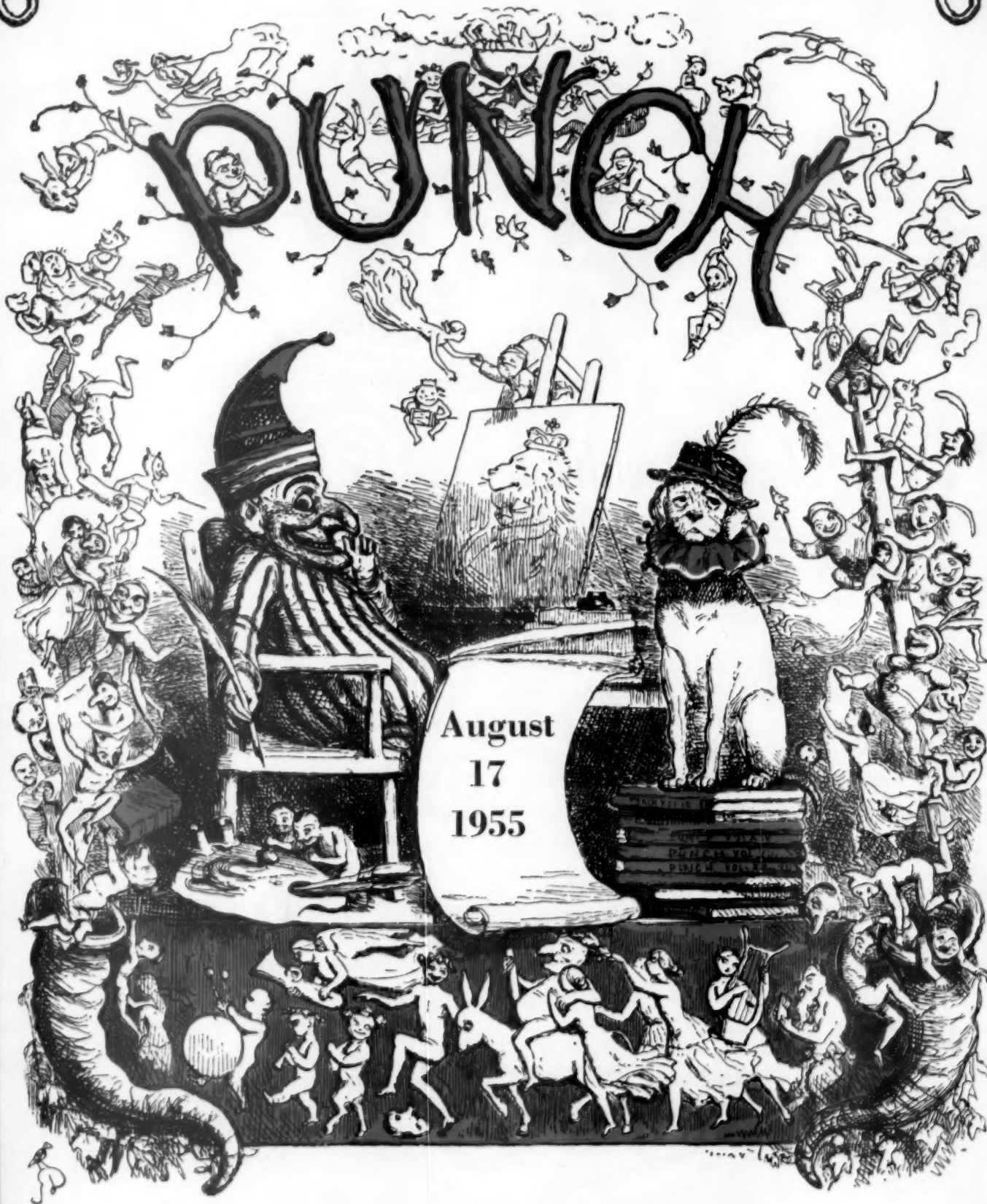


6^d

PUNCH or The London Charivari—August 17 1955

6^d

PUNCH OFFICE 10 BOUVERIE STREET LONDON E.C.4.



The man with a load of mischief

For those who can swallow statistics raw, here is a statement based on Treasury figures and the Anglo-American Team's report on Materials Handling.

It's a biggish pill to swallow. A bitter one, too. Man-handling—the use of human muscle to lift and move goods—is still accounting for 17½% of British industry's handling costs. We are pointlessly, wastefully, loading the cost of what we produce to the tune of £250 millions a year.

Don't blame the men who manage the big, old-established industries. It is largely they who have switched to mechanical handling—and proved that the versatile battery-powered electric truck not only sensation-ally cuts the costs of handling but frees men

for truly productive work. It is the smaller concerns and the new light industries that are holding back. The bogey is Capital Outlay.

What is the answer to that? Only a better understanding of the return available on the outlay. The modern battery electric truck is the simplest, most long-lived, most cheaply maintained mechanical vehicle yet devised. A battery truck can do *all* the handling jobs—it can load and unload, lift, carry and stack to roof level. And its 'fuel' cost, in terms of electric current consumed, is from 1d. an hour.

It is just as true of a factory truck as it is of a dockside crane: it's *cheaper* to buy and use the machine than to hire and misuse muscles.



Exide-Ironclad BATTERIES—a product of Chloride Batteries Limited

★The Company's Battery Traction Advisory Staff is always ready to discuss any aspect of electric traction

V63

CHLORIDE BATTERIES LTD · EXIDE WORKS, CLIFTON JUNCTION, SWINTON, MANCHESTER · Tel. SWINTON 2011
And at LONDON, Elgar 7991 · BRISTOL 22461 · BIRMINGHAM, Central 3076 · LEEDS 20248 · GLASGOW, Bridgeton 3734 · BELFAST 27953

You'll be advised to buy 'Ardil'



because 'Ardil' is warm, absorbent
and completely non-irritant

'Ardil' is the man-made fibre that helps to create comfortable clothes. Comfortable because 'Ardil' is warm and absorbent, like wool. Comfortable because it is soft and smooth—like cashmere and silk. Clothes with 'Ardil' cannot irritate even the most sensitive skins.

For the time being you will find 'Ardil' mainly in shirts and pyjamas.★ There is nothing to equal their quality at such reasonable prices.

Once you've experienced the comfort of 'Ardil' you'll be eager to wear it again.

★ Usually made from 'Ardil' and cotton, these fabrics have a woolly feel, but you can put them away without worry, since 'Ardil' is moth-resistant.



Press COOPER'S into Service!



AGAINST FLIES...

For quick knock-down and certain death to flies, wasps and mosquitoes, just press the button of a Cooper's Household Aerosol. They're clean, easy to handle, and ready for instant action—no filling, no pumping, no soiled hands. More powerful than ordinary flyspray, more lasting in effect, and more economical in use. Contains "Pybuthrin",* the safe, super-efficient flykiller. Non-inflammable, non-poisonous—you can use it in the larder if you like! Take a tin home today. **5/3 : 6/6 : 10/6**

* African pyrethrum synergised with piperonyl butoxide.

**NO FUSS! NO MESS!
JUST PRESS!!**

AGAINST ODOURS...



FRESH-aire

End unpleasant odours instantly with FRESH-aire, Cooper's press-button air freshener. There's no waiting for it to take effect—simply press. A puff's enough for perfect freshness. **5/3**

AGAINST MOTHS...

MOTH-aire

Up to 12 MONTHS protection against moth damage to stored clothes and furnishings—that's what you get after spraying them once with MOTH-aire! Kills moths and their grubs. Pleasingly perfumed with lavender. Try it! **5/6:9/6**



elw/s

COOPER, McDOUGALL & ROBERTSON LTD., BERKHAMSTED, HERTS. EST'D. 1843

LIVE IT AGAIN...

those first faltering steps



Nothing records your family's red letter days like a Bolex C.8. cine camera. And making personal home movies with the Bolex C.8. is a far from expensive hobby. You can take 24 or more good length action shots for under £1 and this includes cost of processing.

Everyone can use the Bolex C.8. too, because filming with this remarkable pocket size cine camera is actually easier than taking ordinary still snapshots.

Ask about the Bolex C.8. at a good photographic shop. They'll tell you Bolex is the finest name in cine cameras, a product of Swiss watchmaker craftsmanship.

you get it **ALL**
with a

BOLEX C8

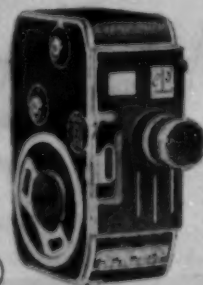
Swiss precision cine camera

SEND FOR DETAILS

GINEX LTD., 9-10 NORTH AUDLEY STREET,
LONDON, W.1

Name

Address



... **SAVES 20%—40%** filing space
... **SAVES 50%** fastening time

An Ofrex stapler on every desk speeds office fastening, makes it neater, cheaper. Remember too, that Ofrex Staplers PIN as well as STAPLE so you can use them for every fastening job.

There is an Ofrex model for every one from the junior to the Managing Director. 'Robust' shown below costs only 30/-; is unconditionally guaranteed for 10 years. See the Ofrex range before you buy staplers.



OFREX



Ofrex Limited, Ofrex House, Newman Street, London, W.1.

RAISE YOUR PIMM'S TO
MISTRESS ABIGAIL TOAD



Born in 150 B.P. (Before Pimm's), Mistress Toad 'did goosify, spatch-cock and juggle right well,' while her wiggs, sillibubs, tharf cakes and possets won her as much renown as the sausage-in-the-hole that bears her name. She married a retired Bow Street Runner and died of a broken heart because she couldn't quite invent Pimm's No. 1.

Where there's a Pimm's there's a party, and if he's a wise party he mixes his Pimm's with fizzy lemonade, adds ice and garnishes with sliced lemon or orange, and cucumber peel if borage isn't handy. One bottle makes lots and lots of this spirited Cup.

PIMM'S No. 1

THE MOST HEAVENLY DRINK ON EARTH



-ABDULLA -

MAKE

THE BEST

VIRGINIA

CIGARETTES+

MOTORISTS

are entitled to know
the plain facts about

PETROL

The better the crude, the better the petrol.

The highest-octane (anti-knock) crude comes from Trinidad, British West Indies.

Regent T.T. is refined from Trinidad crude — and when blended with British Benzole makes the Premium Regent Benzole Mixture.

This gives them both an immense **NATURAL ADVANTAGE** in smooth-running efficiency and exhilarating acceleration.

* **Regent T.T. and Regent Benzole Mixture are British Petrols you can be proud of.**

* **They have naturally high octane value plus volatane controlled combustion.**

These facts **Guarantee**
there are no **better** petrols

REGENT

**PACKS
PUNCH!**





*World-wide technical collaboration
in electrical engineering development*

THE DRIVER-HARRIS ORGANISATION

Close liaison between the companies of the Driver-Harris world-wide organisation is a very real and active policy. It continues to yield an impressive dividend of technical progress.

The liaison is expressed in regular communication and exchange of visits between technologists, a pooling of knowledge on every fresh aspect of wire-drawing technique, and continuous research along parallel lines between the laboratories and manufacturing plants in the United Kingdom, United States, Eire, France, Italy, Austria and Spain.

The result of that collaboration is a succession of advances in the production of nickel-alloy resistance materials of profound importance to all development in the electrical engineering world.

BRITISH DRIVER-HARRIS CO LTD
MANCHESTER 15



*"The greatest name in
electrical resistance materials"*

'Viyella' Longsox 7/9

*Self-supporting.
Nylon-spliced
at toes and heels.
Knee-length for
extra 'Viyella'
comfort.*



'Viyella' Sox 6/9

*Nylon for
toes and heels.
'Viyella' for
health and
comfort.*



'Viyella' Gamesox 5/9

*Ankle-length.
Self-supporting.
Refreshingly cool
in the hottest
of weather.*



IF IT SHRINKS



WE REPLACE

DECENTRALISATION



HEAD OFFICE

Martins Bank has made a friendly personal approach a particular feature of its service to customers. The Bank's system of decentralisation of control into clearly defined districts, with local Boards of Directors and District General Managers in each District, ensures the full advantage of local knowledge and with the care and consideration of your branch manager, the "personal touch" is achieved.

MARTINS BANK LIMITED

Leeds District Office: 28-30, Park Row, 1.
Liverpool District Office: 4, Water Street, 2.
Manchester District Office: 43, Spring Gardens, 2.
Midland District Office: 98, Colmore Row, Birmingham, 3.
North-Eastern District Office:



22, Grey St., Newcastle upon Tyne, 1.

London District Office: 68, Lombard St., E.C.3.

HEAD OFFICE: 4, WATER ST., LIVERPOOL, 2.

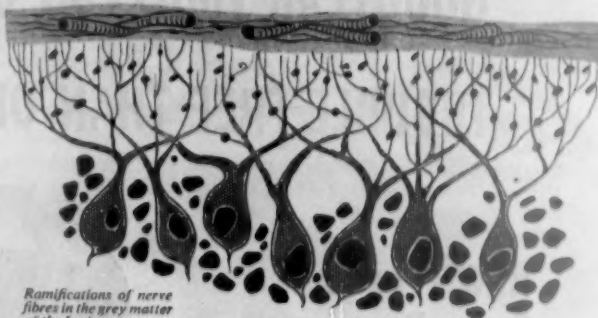
"The Best of the Bunch"

MACKENZIE'S



'Fino Perla' Sherry - 'Regal' Tawny Port
MACKENZIE & CO. LTD.
20, EASTCHEAP, LONDON, E.C.3. JEREZ & OPORTO

Your Nerves may make you worry



Ramifications of nerve fibres in the grey matter of the brain.

To worry when you have cause to worry is natural. But to worry continually is neither normal nor healthy, and can usually be traced to some nervous disturbance. If, then, you seem to worry more than other people, it is more than likely that your nerves are to blame.

How Sanatogen helps you

The working of your nervous system depends upon the activity of your nerve cells. Unless these receive enough protein and phosphorus they "starve"; retarding the normal growth of nerve tissue. To restore the health of such cells, Sanatogen supplies large amounts of protein, together with phosphorus—the two essentials. By this vigorous tonic action Sanatogen helps to overcome "nerves", to reinforce the nervous fabric, and to give you a sturdy, stable nervous system.

Medically recommended

Sanatogen is fully recommended by the medical profession and widely used by doctors here and abroad. No other preparation gives you what Sanatogen contains, and clinical trials under medical supervision have shown that Sanatogen has an exceptional tonic action. You should certainly try Sanatogen yourself.

For all forms of "nerves"

"Nerves" may take many forms—excessive worrying, depression, sleeplessness, irritability, lack of energy, continual tiredness, "run down" conditions, even indigestion. By building up your nervous strength Sanatogen helps you back to full health.

From 6/11. Economical family-size jar available.

Sanatogen

THE PROTEIN NERVE TONIC



The word 'Sanatogen' is a registered trade mark of Genatosan Ltd., Loughborough, Leics.

**32-MILLION-MILE TEST PROVES
GOODYEAR TUBELESS 5 TIMES MORE
TROUBLE-FREE THAN ORDINARY TYRES**

**NEW Freedom
from Punctures**

**EXTRA
Burst Protection**

**LONGER
Safer Tyre Life**



In a 32-million-mile tyre test, the most rigorous ever made, Goodyear Tubeless proved themselves five times more reliable than ordinary tyres. Built with exclusive Grip-Seal Construction they provide greatest ever puncture and burst protection, longer safer mileage, fewer roadside delays and an all-round better ride.

Get these advantages and enjoy this new standard of trouble-free motoring by fitting these great new Goodyear Tubeless NOW. Mount them singly, in pairs or full sets, on all wheels (except wire) of 16" diameter and under.

REPLACE YOUR OLD TYRES NOW WITH GOODYEAR TUBELESS!

They cost no more than an ordinary tyre and tube



CHARIVARIA

THOUGH these are times of virtually instantaneous communications, President Syngman Rhee seems not to have heard that all that old trouble with the Russians is over. The major-general and two colonels of the Red Army whom, among others, Mr. Rhee imagines to have been spying for North Korean Communists, are in reality, of course, mere social emissaries from Moscow seeking to organize a cocktail party with songs, jokes and boating.

Secret Weapon

PRESIDENT EISENHOWER's offer of exchanged military information strikes an answering chord in Mr. Fenner Brockway, M.P., who plans that when



Marshal Bulganin visits us in the spring his itinerary shall include Eton College—with every facility to inspect the historic playing fields.

All-Singing, All-Suing

AN amusement park in California, says an American dispatch, is featuring "Snow White, Mickey Mouse, Peter Pan and other Walt Disney characters." Others expected to join the show any minute are the literary executors of Sir James Barrie.

Thousands Maimed by Gum-Drops

NONE but the kindest motives can have prompted Senator Flanders' proposal to send fleets of bombers into Communist China dropping loads of wheat. U.S. Air Force chiefs, however, rusting since the Geneva peace-drive, may only see in the Senator a welcome herald of renewed action, and rush into plans for forcible feeding combat teams,

advance breakfast cereal posts and schemes to flood the Hwang-Ho with bourbon. Even so, no harm done. The trouble will be resisting the temptation to drop in something a little more indigestible from time to time.

New Elizabethans

OLD entertainment techniques were bound to come up to date in the end. Press handouts from Scarborough's "Theatre in the Round," which has its stage set in the middle of the audience, describe the result of this as "exciting and real. It is theatre in 3D."

One Alderman on Top

IT seems a pity that an official commission has turned down proposals by Edinburgh Corporation to build their own buses. The notion, if approved, might have spread, putting an end to these unsavoury cases of civic dignitaries travelling everywhere in Corporation cars.

Follow This Up

ALWAYS ready with helpful tips on topical themes, the *Daily Telegraph* diarist last week did his best for Mr. Ian Hunter, of the Edinburgh Festival, who is searching for a Japanese girl to



announce in English items of the forthcoming Tokyo dancers' programme. "One who speaks Scots-English would be best," suggested the *Telegraph*—and recalled that a nephew of Mme. Chiang Kai-shek served in the Scots Guards during the war.

Fugitive From a Probe

QUOTED in the annual report of the National Assistance Board is a "hearten-

ing story" about a man of eighty-four who was approached by a Board visitor and asked about his health. Instead of answering he started to climb a tree—"by way of demonstration," the report says. This isn't going to deceive anyone. A man of eighty-four can tell a pollster at sight, and nips up a tree without waiting for the question.

Return Refreshed

WHEN a man at a south coast resort spent one night last week on a bed of nails, rising in the morning to breakfast off broken electric-light bulbs, razor blades and lighted tapers and later pulling three saloon cars linked together along the promenade with his teeth,



many holidaymakers hailed the performance as a flight from television to good, clean, old-fashioned entertainment. Others were of opinion that he was simply a family man training for a fortnight at a local boarding-house.

Nature Will Out

GRUNDISBURGH, under the iron rule of its parish council chairman, qualified last week for the title of best-kept village in Suffolk. Shears, mowers and even scissars had brought its hedges and borders to a state of sharp green geometry, and for months of stern preparation not a cigarette-packet, wooden ice-cream spoon, dead match, toffee-wrapping or old newspaper had been seen out of doors. According to one report, tidiness had "become a virtuous obsession" with the villagers. What of the future? Are the Grundisburians to stay at home, picketing the streets against vandalistic outsiders who might innocently let fly with a parcel of

stale sandwiches, or to escape over the border into the next parish for an orgiastic catharsis of bottle-smashing, fruit-throwing and wrenched-down litter baskets?

Passenger Psychology

SIR BRIAN ROBERTSON's frank admiration for the French railways and loud declarations of their superiority over our own may at first seem startling and imprudent: an established rule for any administrator is never to admit error. But in reality Sir Brian is as shrewd as they come, and in no time his action will be vindicated by British patriots bursting into the correspondence columns



with indignant claims that our trains are cleaner, faster, cheaper, more comfortable and more reliable than anything those erratic Frenchman can ever hope to produce.

May Never Happen?

It is lucky that emphasis has been placed on the "atoms for peace" aspect of the present international conference at Geneva, otherwise some uneasiness could attend such advertised lecture subjects as "The Genetic Problem of Irradiated Human Populations."

Murder in the Chapel

THIS year's bardic crown went to the author of a three hundred and eighty-line poem lamenting "the passing of the old way of life" in his native Cardiganshire. Papers reporting this were naturally unable to reproduce the prize-winning work, but summed up the gist of the thing by describing the poet as "a Baptist minister who writes thrillers in his spare time."

Chill Wind

For some unhappy people it cannot be so certain

That the East-West thaw is the answer to their prayers.

There's Kravchenko (*I Chose Freedom*), stuck on our side of the curtain,

And Burgess and Maclean on theirs.

ALGEBRA FOR BEGINNERS

Exercise 1a

1. Four men travel to Geneva. One is coming from Russia, another from America, another from Britain and the fourth from France. Three are blind. The fourth is a pick-pocket. Which is the pick-pocket, and how much will he take off the blind men?

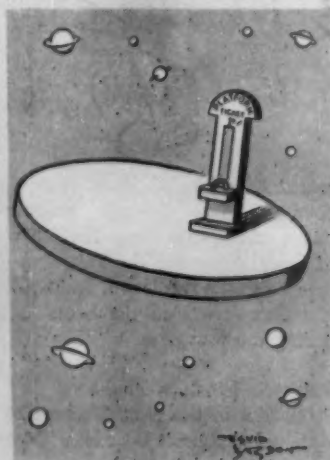
2. Four climbers all reach the summit. When they get there they shake hands. One climber, who had very little oxygen, then takes all the oxygen off the other three. They then all shake hands again. Which was the most experienced climber?

3. An American and a Russian are playing a game at a drinking party. Each time the American toasts the Russian, he concedes three points. Each time the Russian toasts the American, he gains two points. If the total number of toasts is x and the number of points gained by the Russian is y , how many points has the American lost?

4. If an American general travels in ten years from SHAEF to the White House, how many times will his views about Russia change, given that there is another American election next year?

Exercise 1b

1. If it takes one American President and one American Foreign Secretary a



week to surrender half their advantage, how long will it take one British Prime Minister and half a British Foreign Secretary to surrender it all? Express the solution symbolically.

2. What is the function of "There ain't gonna be any war"?

3. If there are 400 prisoners in China, and the Chinese offer to return 11 of them, how grateful should the other 389 be and how long will it be before they are forgotten? Do not express in terms of human lives, in case it should be too embarrassing.

Exercise 2a

1. $\frac{\text{Nato}}{\text{red}^2} = x$.

What is x , given that it is not surrender?

2. How is it possible to square (a) Eisenhower and (b) Eden? If Eisenhower equals x and Eden equals y , what is z in the equation $x^2 + y^2 = z$? If you are a Conservative member, do not attempt this question, or you will lose your seat.

3. Find the vulgar fraction of Mr. Anthony Nutting.

Exercise 2b

1. If seven Poles and two Czechs dig seventeen graves for political prisoners in eighteen hours, why should anyone object?

2. A Czech liberal throws himself from a window in an attempt to commit suicide. The window is x feet from the ground. At the same time an aeroplane carrying an American President to Geneva is also x feet from the ground. Which of the two will live, and does it matter?

3. An American President pours 150 words into a microphone every minute and the newspapers release them at the rate of 70 words a minute. How long will it take them to release a picture of his laugh? H. F.



THE CRAZY GANG



"Of course, the Egyptians are too full of materialistic hustle and bustle to be really cultured. All they care anything about is size—the biggest pyramids, the fastest chariots, the tallest obelisks . . ."

This is Your Walpurgisnacht

By ALEX ATKINSON

The stage is a bare cell. The walls are smudged with the blood and sweat of previous Amusers. From the ceiling a powerful light shines down on the Chair of Entertainment. The Chair is of iron, studded with brass and fitted with chains for the feet and wrists. From a hook in the back wall hangs a brown strait-jacket decorated with caps and bells.

The Audience is tense and drawn. White-coated Attendants pass silently up and down the aisles offering peanuts, raw flesh, and iced lollies. A flashing electric sign in the roof incessantly spells out the words *Why Are You Here?* A fashionably dressed Woman in the front row blindfolds herself with muslin and stuffs cotton-wool partly into her ears.

Five television cameras watch through secret holes. The Camera Crews, nailed to the floor, piteously eye their Guards, who stand by with drugs and bayonets.

The orchestra plays a potpourri of "There's No Business Like Show Business," "Souvenirs," "There Must Be a Reason," and "I Believe." This is followed by a drum-roll. The houselights are turned full on. St. John Ambulance Men unfasten the flaps of their knapsacks. An organ plays "Danny Boy" and other sacred pieces. All exit doors are bolted and barred by remote control.

Suddenly the *PERSUADER* springs up through a trap in the cell in a cloud of acrid smoke. He is round, hairless, shiny, with a permanent smile and an invisible, prehensile tail. His false teeth snap and glisten. His hands are soft and fleshy. His costume is something between a toga and a butcher's overall. He carries a Big Book. Pink steam constantly rises from him, due to the warmth of his bonhomie. His grandmother was daft, his father ate spaniels: we will never know this.

THE *PERSUADER*: Good evening to you all. Once again we are met together to look right deep into a real, live human being and find our Entertainment. (Applause and laughter. A small Tobaccoist leaves his seat and dashes up the aisle. He is seized and knocked senseless by three Attendants.) As usual, no expense has been spared. No nerve will be left unexposed, no ancient wound unprobed, no possible stench concealed. Good, honest, simple Fun. Bring those kiddies down out of their cots, viewers: this is, as you ought to know by now, essentially a family show. Also, it advertises nothing—except the innate goodness, weakness, beauty, terror, comradeship, greed, helplessness and simple faith of all mankind. And

what could be more Amusing than that? (He roars with kindly laughter and his belly shakes.)

Applause. An ELDERLY MASOCHIST rises in the Pit with staring eyes. He waves a copy of last week's "News of the World" from which eleven short news items have been clipped.

ELDERLY MASOCHIST (passionately): Let it be me!

PERSUADER (jovially): We'll see, we'll see.

He descends to the Auditorium. An Attendant hands him a riding-whip. He walks in dead silence up and down the aisles, quivering with silent laughter. He halts abruptly, moves along Row E like a water-diviner, halts again, sniffs like a retriever, and finally hurls the Big Book in triumph on to the knees of the AMUSER.

A crash of cymbals. An outburst of delighted howls from the Audience lasting one minute, during which time they all have wolves' heads. Saliva trickles down to the Fauteuils. This may be an illusion, and the wolves' heads may be papier mâché. It is hard to tell.

The AMUSER is in his forties. He is an unfrightened man without much hair. He is strong, with broad shoulders, a challenging jaw and a cheap suit. He has a signet ring. He is unaccustomed to public speaking. He thought this was Twenty Questions, which he doesn't like much anyway. The Big Book lies open on his knees, and the first page reads "This is YOUR Walpurgisnacht!"

PERSUADER: Ladies and gentlemen—Mr. John Robinsmithson, of Chubberleighcastle. (Applause.) You can tell John is a sport just by looking at him—can't you, ladies and gentlemen?

VOICES: Yes!... No!... Kick him!... Let me out!... etc.

PERSUADER (in a sing-song voice, as to a backward child recently scared by a runaway horse): Come a-long, John-nie!

AMUSER (dully): Eh?

The PERSUADER grabs him swiftly by the lapels, yanks him out of his seat, and hustles him up to the stage, chuckling benignly and cracking his whip. Laughter. The AMUSER turns and stumbles like a wounded bull. Attendants lift him into the cell and sit him in the Chair of Entertainment. He shades his eyes from the blinding light, which shows up his broken shoe-lace, the plum-coloured stain on his sleeve, two blackheads on his cheek, the gap in his yellow teeth, the scar on his neck, the two brown-stained fingers on his right hand, his four-shilling tie, the chewed end of a pencil in his top pocket, and the hairs which sprout from his nostrils. He is British, and a sport. He smiles a little, and gives a sort of wave to the Audience. He means to be comically rueful, but he looks clumsy and inept. He also looks green because he has no make-up.

PERSUADER: Well now, John—you don't mind my calling you John, do you?—first of all, you're among friends. We're not here to pull your leg—you know that, don't you? (The AMUSER grins sheepishly and licks his lips.) All right, then. You were born in 1910, in an unpretentious street in the quaint old Lancashire town of Belsh. You remember Mummy, don't you?

The AMUSER's mouth falls open a little. A coloured slide falls, covering the right wall of the cell. It is a magnified photograph of a rheumy, sly-looking, toothless old lady with one arm across her chest, standing in the backyard of a slum house. Underpants hang on the line. There is a broken drain-pipe. The orchestra plays "If Those Lips Could Only Speak," etc. Laughter.

PERSUADER: That was Mummy on her seventieth birthday. You weren't there for that, were you, John? (The AMUSER's gape widens. He shakes his head.) Of course not. You were very busy. You were there for the funeral though, of course. That was a nice gesture, ladies and gentlemen.





John travelled all the way from Chubberleighcastle to Belsh for the funeral. You'd never really liked your mother, had you, John?

The AMUSER half rises, with a dazed look. The Attendants instantly chain him to the chair by the ankles.

AMUSER (bemused): Here—wait a minute—

PERSUADER: And yet, ladies and gentlemen, he was there for the funeral. (In his holiest voice): And you may be sure she appreciated that tiny gesture, John. Because there was really only you and your dad and your Uncle Ed, wasn't there? Did you like her? (Coaxingly): You did really, didn't you?

AMUSER (weakly): There was misunderstandings. The money from—

PERSUADER: Of course there were. But you forgave that sweet old lady in the end, and followed her weeping to her last resting-place.

AMUSER (stammering): It's a long story, I— My brother was—

PERSUADER: Yes, yes, of course. (Suddenly): Seen your wife lately, John?

The AMUSER seems to shrink.

A WOMAN'S VOICE (from a hidden loud-speaker): You never even wrote, John. A letter would have meant a lot. I didn't ask no more.

The AMUSER grips the arms of the Chair. Applause.

PERSUADER: Come along, Agnes.

Agnes is shot up through the trap—a shabby woman of forty, with wrinkled stockings and a basket of groceries.

AMUSER (involuntarily): Aggie!

AGNES (shyly): They made me, John—they paid all me expenses. (Laughter. The AMUSER hangs his head.)

PERSUADER: Say something, John.

AGNES (apologetically): We never got on right from the start, sir, not really, me and John. He had more go than what I ever had.

PERSUADER: There's a real-life drama, ladies and gentlemen! Out John walks one night in 1950, and never sets eyes on Aggie again until this precious moment! Give him a kiss, Aggie.

AMUSER (indistinctly): Take her away.

AGNES (timidly): I wouldn't kiss you, John. I wouldn't do nothing to hurt you, you know that.

PERSUADER: You love him, don't you, Agnes?

AGNES (after a pause): Yes, I do.

PERSUADER (triumphantly): There now, John—she loves you still, and wants to have you back!

AGNES (frightened): No!— I—

AMUSER (hoarsely): I done wrong, I know that.

PERSUADER: Speak up, John.

AMUSER: We'd never have hit it off.

AGNES (apologetically): It was the boy dying of consumption that done it. (Laughter, and some cries of "Sssh!") John never seemed the same after. I wouldn't have minded if he'd only drunk in the house—bring it in with him, like. Only, you get lonely. So I got a bit . . . like . . . nagging, and that. (She wipes her eyes on a piece of tissue paper from her shopping bag. The orchestra plays "Roses of Picardy.")

AMUSER (suddenly aggressive): You've got another feller, haven't you?

AGNES (quietly): It's not the same, John. He looks down on me. (She hesitates.) I wouldn't have bothered you, only this gentleman . . . (She indicates the PERSUADER, cries and sits down on a chair which an Attendant places for her at the back.)

Immediately, OLIVE comes up through the trap—a blowsy lady in her late thirties. The AMUSER gasps, and tries desperately to get away.

PERSUADER: Ah—there you are, Olive. I don't think you ever met Agnes, did you?

OLIVE (sneering): I never 'ad that pleasure.

AGNES blinks at her, uncomprehending.

PERSUADER: You worked in the packing department at Simmle and Bango's, didn't you?

OLIVE: Aye. Romantic he was, them days.

The orchestra plays Beethoven's Minuet in G. The AMUSER covers his face with his hands.

PERSUADER: Where was it he kissed you, again?

OLIVE: The first time? On me leg. 'Ere—behind me kneec. (She raises her skirt and shows a fat leg.) I was up a ladder, see? Didn't 'alf tickle, an' all. (Laughter. The AMUSER struggles, and is held by two Attendants.)

PERSUADER (laughing heartily): Ah, John, you were quite a Gay Lothario, weren't you?—You see, Agnes, you didn't know much about your hubby, did you?

OLIVE: And I've never forgiven him yet for gettin' me the

push, neither, just because he thought I was 'avin' a kid, which I wasn't, so there! Nasty, schemin'— (She makes to attack the AMUSER, and is restrained and pushed into a chair.)

PERSUADER (heartily): Well, this is quite a family party, eh, John? And more to come, you know!

A BLIND MAN appears. (Applause). He passes his hands over the AMUSER's face.

BLIND MAN (falling on his knees): It is! It is! Praise be to God! (Weeping, clawing at the AMUSER's legs): John . . . John . . . forgive me! I done you out of the money, John—your own brother—but it never got me nowhere in the finish. Look at me. (He slithers to the floor, sobbing.)

AMUSER (brokenly): Arnold . . . Oh, God . . .

A MAN IN THE STALLS (jumping up): This is disgraceful!

PERSUADER (nastily): Who asked you?

AN OLD, OLD MAN hobbles out of the trap with two sticks.

AMUSER (crying helplessly): Dad! (Applause.)

THE OLD, OLD MAN (approaching): Nay, lad, I never thowt to see thee again before I died. (The orchestra plays "Hearts and Flowers.") They fetched me from Ameriky—all this way! Nay, lad, it's good to see thee . . . (His voice breaks. He embraces the AMUSER, and tears rain down his face.)

PERSUADER: A touching moment, ladies and gentlemen. A truly touching moment.

AMUSER: Don't, Dad . . . Don't . . . Don't cry, Dad . . . It's all right . . . It's . . . Oh, God help me . . .

The OLD, OLD MAN has a heart attack, and is carried off by the Attendants.

AMUSER (screaming): Dad! . . . Dad! . . . I'm sorry, Dad! I'm sorry for all I done. Dad!—I love you!— (He threshes about wildly, and the Attendants have a struggle to get him into the strait-jacket. Somebody breaks down one of the exit doors. There is no panic.)

A LADY IN THE BACK ROW: Very realistic, the way they get these things up.

HER NEIGHBOUR: I wonder if it's stopped raining?

The AMUSER collapses, and is revived with sal volatile. AGNES is weeping. OLIVE is ogling one of the Attendants. The BLIND MAN has fallen asleep. The Amuser's mother looks down at them all from the wall.

PERSUADER (softly): That's your life, John. (He puts the Big Book on the AMUSER's knees.) And here's a little souvenir of the occasion. (He opens the Book in the middle. It is hollow, and contains a lock of the Amuser's mother's hair, one of his wife's teeth, Olive's garter, a snap of the Blind Man playing cricket as a lad, and a broken pipe belonging to the Old, Old Man.) Treasure it, John. Memories are precious.

The orchestra plays "These Foolish Things."

AMUSER (dimly): Thank you, sir.

PERSUADER (to the audience): And now—God bless us every one. (Applause. The curtain falls. There is a crash in the far distance as another legitimate theatre is demolished.)

A MAN IN A BROWN SUIT (on the way out): Going to the wrestling to-night, Jack?



Mid-Ulster's Elections

By CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS

THE careful examiner of walls and windows could, it is true, find a little evidence of interest in Omagh in its Mid-Ulster election—a notice on the wall by St. Patrick's Hall of a Sinn Fein meeting to denounce all Unionists and Nationalists, the Government of Northern Ireland and the Government of the Republic and "to unite Ireland"—pictures in the window of the *Tyrone Constitution* of the presentation of a banner to Johnston's Purple Heroes (Loyal Orange Lodge No. 205) at Douglas Bridge. But the only glaring sign of electioneering was on the hideous piece of corrugated iron opposite the Barracks where someone had painted up in gigantic letters "VOTE" and then left it blank who they were to vote for.

It was at O'Reilly's that evening that I learnt why.

It is usual in elections to discover at least two persons who are willing, if elected, to go to Westminster. Not so in Mid-Ulster where the last thing that either the Sinn Fein or the Unionist candidate wanted—if for somewhat different reasons—was a seat in Parliament. There was, it seemed, only one person in Mid-Ulster who wanted to go to Parliament and that was Paddy Rafferty. I met Paddy Rafferty in

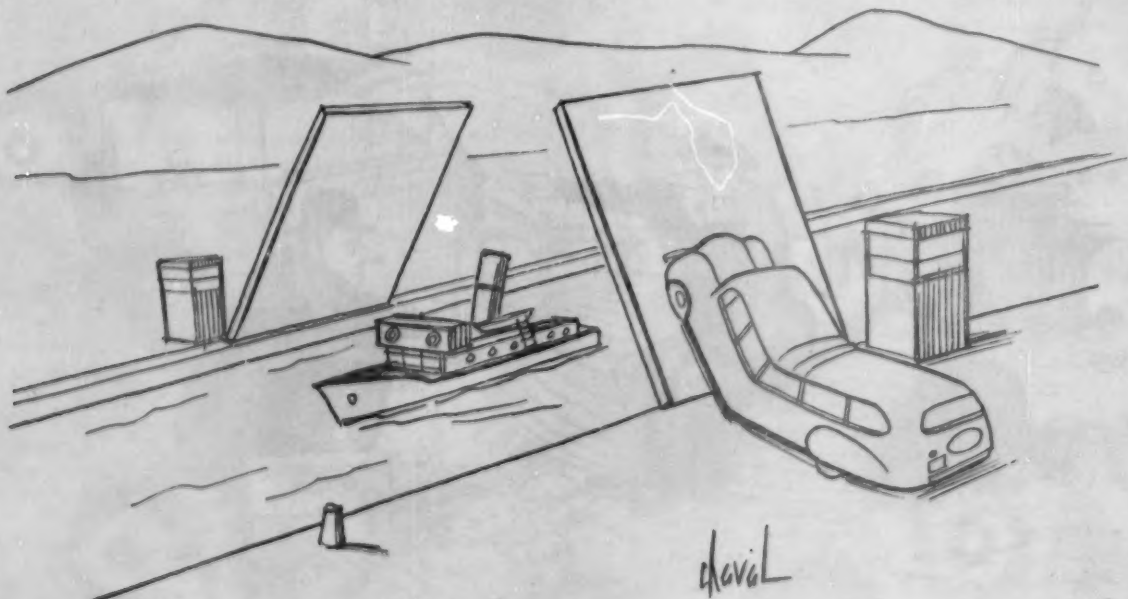
O'Reilly's and he explained to me why it was that he wanted to be a Member of Parliament. You got £1,000 a year—which was a great deal more than he got at present from "Connolly." He had discovered—truly enough—that all that he had to do to draw his pay was to take his seat and then he need never go near the place again. Therefore, as soon as he learnt that there was a suggestion that Mr. Mitchell would not be opposed, Paddy Rafferty had planned to put in his own nomination at the last minute. He admitted that it was highly improbable that he would receive any other vote than his own. But what of that? Mr. Mitchell would be declared ineligible. Mr. Rafferty, as the next candidate, would necessarily be declared elected. "It's the law," he explained with irrefutable logic. "They can't go against the law."

I explained to him that, though he would be elected, he would nevertheless forfeit his deposit. He had thought of this and admitted it. But so good a thing was he on to that, as he told me, "Connolly himself" had agreed to advance him the £150 at a very moderate rate of usury, seeing quite clearly that Rafferty would be on balance the financial gainer and would in addition "make a cod of the British."

Mr. Rafferty would not positively swear that it was purely out of spite to him that the Unionists had finally been persuaded to fight the seat, but he clearly thought as much and had moreover a great sympathy with Mr. Beattie, the Unionist candidate, who had, he alleged, been shamefully treated in being compelled to stand when he did not want to. "Call this freedom?" he cried in indignation. "Here's Mitchell who doesn't want to go to prison has to go to prison, and Beattie who doesn't want to go to Parliament has to go to Parliament. Can't anybody go the place he wants to go in this bloody country?"

As to his own political opinions, Mr. Rafferty was, he explained, a strong opponent of the Northern Ireland Government and of the British Government. When he had lived in the Republic of Ireland he had been a strong opponent of all the Governments in that country. He was a strong opponent of the I.R.A., but he was, on the other hand, a staunch supporter of partition. Tyrone, he argued, was a natural geographical unit, so created by God—separate in tradition, history, race, economic interest and habits of life from all the rest of Ireland.

I asked him why he thought this to be so.



"It stands to reason," he said. "Why should the people of Tyrone be submitted to the base and brutal imperialistic tyranny of either Dublin or Belfast?" Mr. Mitchell had, it must be admitted to his credit, attacked the barracks in Omagh, but he was from Dublin—"a foreigner." Tyrone should be an independent monarchy, "associated with," but not "belonging to" the Commonwealth. Modesty alone prevented him from suggesting the name of the monarch. As for frontiers, since smuggling was the major industry of the county, the more of this the better. No government—not even a British, not even an Irish government—would dare to interfere with smuggling.

"The people," he said, "would never stand for it."

Mr. Rafferty professed, as I say, a great admiration for Mr. Beattie, who, as he alleged, had no wish to be a Member of Parliament. (Whether this is so, I cannot say, for I never met Mr. Beattie.) It was a shameful thing that Mr. Beattie should be tricked into being a Member of Parliament when he did not want to be one. In the coming election there was little doubt that Mr. Mitchell would be returned and would be declared ineligible. Mr. Beattie would then be declared elected. Was there no chance of saving Mr. Beattie from this dreadful fate?

Mr. Rafferty was not without hope. Mr. Mitchell, he well understood, was ineligible. But was there any reason why Mr. Beattie should not be ineligible too? Then they could have another election in which Mr. Rafferty could stand and be returned. Surely Mr. Beattie, he argued, could be convicted of felony as well as Mr. Mitchell. "They can't go against the law," he argued. "It wouldn't be right."

I made the point that it was just possible that Mr. Beattie had not committed any felony. Of this argument he was contemptuous. He replied that the law said nothing about anyone committing a felony. All that it said was that he must be convicted of a felony.

"Surely," he said, "on a matter like that the police and the courts would be reasonable—the more so seeing that it's a case of making a cod of the British."

Or again, was it not the law that a candidate could be unseated if it was shown that he was elected by "wholesale impersonation"? Now the Nationalists,



"... You've forgotten to kiss me goodbye."

he argued, did not want Mid-Ulster to be represented at Westminster. They knew that it could not be represented by their own candidate anyway. Therefore their one concern was that it should not be represented by the Unionist candidate. All that was necessary to get Mr. Beattie unseated was for enough Nationalist voters to agree to impersonate one another and to vote for Mr. Beattie. All this could be arranged.

"The Irish," he explained, "are a very political people. They have a great sense of public duty."

"After all," he continued with some force, "what are we sent into this world for except to do good? Now here in Mid-Ulster the Sinn Feiners do not want to have a member at Westminster, and the Unionists do not want to have a member at Westminster. Mitchell doesn't want to go to Westminster, and Beattie doesn't want to go to Westminster. I'm the only bloody man in all Mid-Ulster who wants to be a Member of Parliament, and wouldn't you think it a shame if, just out of spite, the Attorney-General should step in and stop me being a Member of Parliament?"

I agreed that, put like that, his case indeed seemed to be a strong one, but sooner or later closing-time comes even in Omagh, and as they gathered up the glasses I heard Mr. Rafferty complaining sadly, "Now the trouble about the British is that there's not one of them that has a sense of humour."

Song of the Ministry of Works

O LONDON, lovely London,
O truly urban town,
When all the grass is rooted up
And all the trees cut down.
When through the parks each evening
The petrol wafts its scent
And cars go by as lovers lie
On reinforced cement.
O London, lovely London,
O truly urban town,
When all the grass is rooted up
And all the trees cut down.

GEOFFREY PARSONS



"Would you mind suspending your breathing, sir, while we take the official photographs?"

From Our Special Correspondent

Honest, Fearless and Alert

By CLAUD COCKBURN

WHAT you are probably longing to do is pick up the telephone in that distant Capital City and dictate, for benefit of a million British breakfast tables, the news that the Prime Minister of that distant land has the skids under him, and some think Senator Baumshutz is the coming man, and others Pirinelli, and anyway everyone should keep his fingers crossed.

Not merely anyone can telephone such news. To do so successfully and regularly—not just once in a while like these fly-by-night Special Correspondents, buzz in for a couple of weeks and out again thinking they know it all—you need to be the accredited, resident, Foreign Correspondent of a newspaper.

There is no way of explaining fully just how you or your boy or—for this happens too—your girl can get to be a Foreign Correspondent. The methods—if that is a permissible term for the varied and usually chaotic procedures involved—are too numerous to be susceptible of description here. Some day the Press Council may get around to issuing a booklet for use in schools.

You may even have to serve a longish apprenticeship in Foreign Capitals with some codger who recalls how he summed up, in three thousand words of cablese, the significance of Mussolini's March on Rome, or Gandhi's March to the Sea, or Luce's March on *Time*, until he has you marching straight

into a bottomless inferiority complex. The clearest and simplest way of putting it is to say that one day you are not the Foreign Correspondent of a great newspaper, vividly reporting and interpreting significant events and above all bringing that understanding of the common people of Bloop without which etc., etc., and the next day you are.

First, last and all the time keep trying not to forget which great newspaper you are Foreign Correspondent of. Thus, when others are dashing to get off the news that a G.I. has been raped by a Fraülein from Frankfurt, remember that *The Times* probably will not be caring, much.

For a brief period, during which

everyone else had gone off on a beano, I had the exquisitely schizophrenic experience of being New York Correspondent of no fewer than four British newspapers at the same time.

On the very first day, a cable came from one of them saying "Please good woman story to-day." I knew enough to know that this didn't mean they wanted a story about a good woman, but I was still trying to figure out whether what the customers required was a good story about women designed to interest men or a good story about, say, hats designed to interest women, when one of my other temporary clients came up with a cable asking for "800 words urgentest American reactions death Thomas Hardy."

It seemed inadequate to reply that I personally was sorry indeed to hear of it, but my meditations as to what else I could possibly say with any colour of truth were interrupted. The third cable said "Send sensational story to-day indicating futility administration efforts arrest market decline indicating probability bottom earliest outcrash."

This, at least, had the merit of being perfectly clear: it left one in no doubt that someone of importance in or around the London office was selling a bear.

I asked the Correspondent of that particular newspaper, when he got back from his beano, why they went to the expense of maintaining a New York office and paying his salary—why did they not just write the stuff in the office and pretend it came from a New York Correspondent. He was profoundly shocked.

"Good Lord, no!" he said. "They wouldn't do that. They wouldn't think it was honest."

(In this connection, never forget that three things you simply must be if you are going to be a Foreign Correspondent are honest, fearless, and alert to every aspect of etc., etc., etc. It says so right here in the book of words.)

A thing you need not decide immediately, but will have to make up your mind about fairly soon, is whether you are aiming to be mainly a Sound Man or mainly a Lone Wolf.

The extreme of Lone Lupinism is probably best exemplified by the behaviour of an American Correspondent I knew in London during the early 1930s. His colleagues, of course, were all writing their heads off about economic

collapse, and the Hunger Marchers, and can the National Government survive and such. The Lone Wolf, Correspondent of a small but distinguished newspaper, coolly left all that sort of thing to the Agencies, and for months and months busied himself detecting and unearthing and documenting some piece of oily skulduggery which he believed the British Government was up to in connection with Kuwait or Bahrein or one of those areas.

During all this time, naturally, his paper was thinking worse and worse of him. But at the end of it there was he with a brand new exclusive sensation—crucial moves in world struggle for oil, etc., etc., etc.—while the others had

nothing to show but the relics of the tired old British crisis.

A big advantage of Lone Lupinism is that you don't have to go to the office and read the vernacular press, and above all you don't have to go to Press Conferences at the local Foreign Office or State Department or whatever they may have in your particular Foreign Capital and be informed that yes, the Foreign Office (or State Department) has had its attention drawn to reports that the earth is rotating on its axis and, while deprecating sensationalism, is studying the situation very carefully and will certainly stand firm in the face of aggression from whatever quarter it may loom.



"Mine."

On the other hand it's dangerous: you go howling lonesomely after the wrong sledge, or it emerges there wasn't any oil there anyway, and you may find yourself so lonely you don't even have gainful employment. Being a Sound Man may be a bit tedious and repetitive, and you find yourself eating with the same informed informants week after week and month after month till you know what misleading and tendentious statement they are going to make almost before the second cocktail is down their throats, but at least you eat.

As a matter of fact you need not be so frightfully nervous about all these lies that are going to be told to you by the cunning diplomats and politicians. Bear in mind that most officials and politicians are either too indolent or too stupid to tell a lie that would deceive a trustful child, or even a former official of the Ministry of Information, for more than about twenty minutes, and that quite often this fearful piece of fatuous nonsense they are telling you—which you at first assume to be a clumsy attempt to pull the wool over your eyes—really and truly does represent their "considered view of the situation," their "policy." (And above all don't laugh.)

In general, while playing yourself in as a Sound Man, you need to watch that laughter-tendency pretty sharply. Be at all times absolutely sure that the Official Spokesman *knows* that what he is saying is funny. A good way here is to hold everything until the Super-Sound Man among the Correspondents assembled for the Press Conference—un-sound men sometimes refer to him as a "stooge"—starts to ask the amusing question which is going to get the Official Spokesman out of the nasty hole into which unsound questions have pushed him.

Thus, we are talking of S.E. Asia, and

the Official Spokesman has just said that, except in case of war, his Government stands for peace, and some whipper-snapper has asked him to "clarify" that.

Super-Sound Man now intervenes to say "May we take it that there is as yet no official indication that Australia intends to withdraw from SEATO in protest against the loss of the Davis Cup?" The Official Spokesman now says "I think I am right in saying that the cordiality of relations between all the Governments concerned is such that one might describe the position as Love All."

Now it's all right to laugh.

Find out, too, about being helpful. You won't realize, probably, at the outset, how much the British Embassy, and the Foreign Office, and indeed the whole Cabinet, need your help, and how snappy they can turn if they don't get it.

"Afraid I didn't think that last piece of yours was too helpful, old boy."

Give cause for such a remark to be made to you more than very, very occasionally, and you'll pretty soon find yourself shot right out of the Sound Men's class. Unfortunately Being Helpful is a little hard to define. In its simplest form it means, of course, showing how right the British Ambassador was when he made that speech which everyone else thought was such a clanging brick-drop. The same applies, naturally, to the general policy of what, by now, you will have learned to refer to as H.M.G., in relation to the country to which you are accredited.

But there are other ways. Suppose, for example, this Foreign Country has Exasperated British Public Opinion—stolen a British railway, say, or laid claim to some bit of the Empire. Also its newspapers are writing that Britain is a land of decadent no-goods who are going straight down the drain and jolly good riddance.

Well then, you write a thoughtful piece saying that whatever statesmen may do, however intemperate may be the outbursts of certain sections of the press, the man in the street harbours no ill-feeling towards Britain. Rather does he remember with heartfelt gratitude the inestimable benefits which, etc., etc., etc.

Your paper prints this piece, and it also has a leading article commenting on it, and saying that it all goes to show that the man in the street has his heart in the right place and we ought to have it there too.

This bit of old rope is then cabled back—by helpful men—to the country whose earth you are currently salting, and it promotes goodwill.

Don't, for heaven's sake, start worrying about whether anything has actually happened.

To Julia, not to Delay upon a Journie

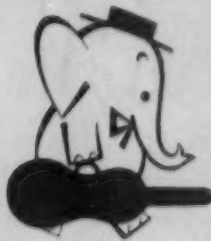
WHEN, on the Morrow, thou
awak'st

And (*Julia*) thy couch forsak'st,
Let not thy Preparation bee
A barre to Punctualitie:
Duste not, with Poudre-puffe, thy Face
Nor Salve on lips (sweet cherries!) place.
Thinke, what emotions will be mine
To greete thee on the Stroak of Nine—
More tragickal by farre, my Fate
T'arrive, and find my *Julia* late:
No *Porter* can restore my Joy,
And een to talke of *Crew* will cloy,
When eagreness each Thought doth
bende
On Bourne-mouth, and the long week's-
end.

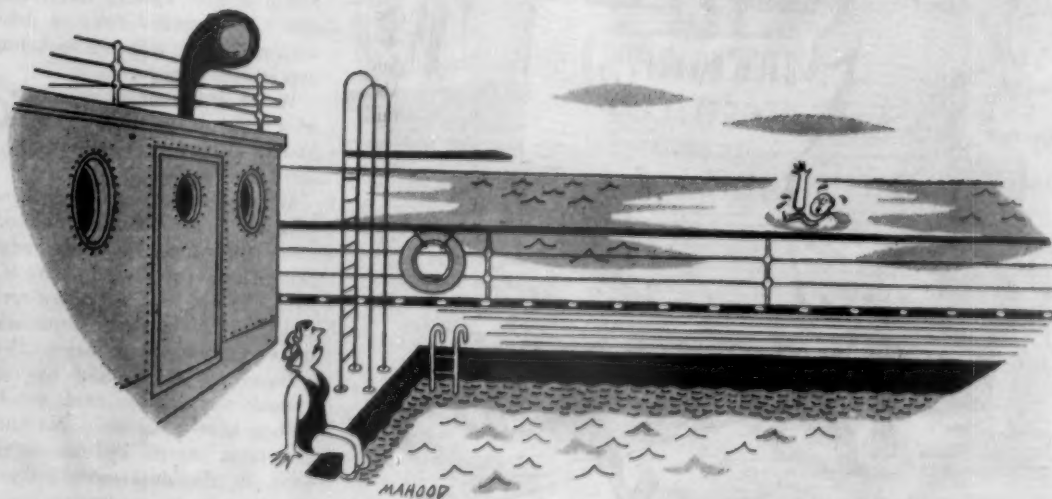
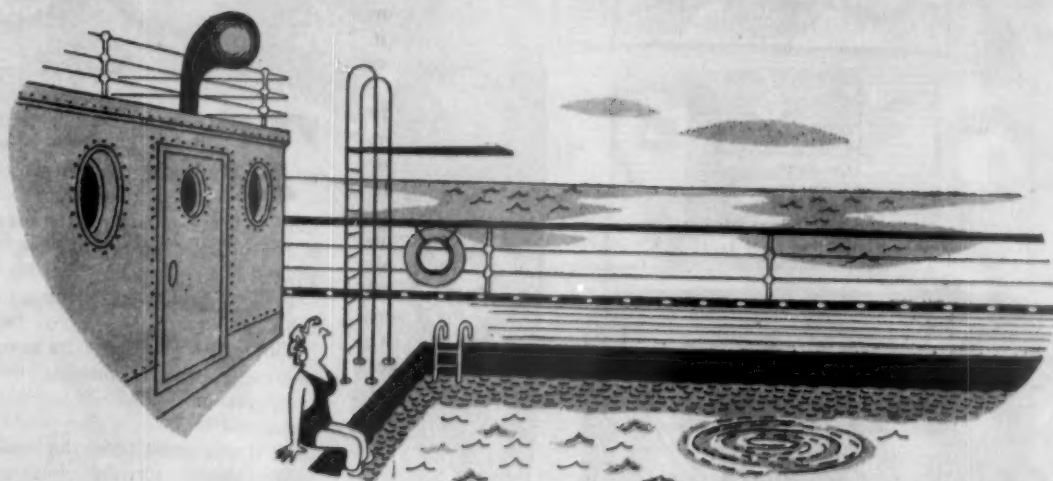
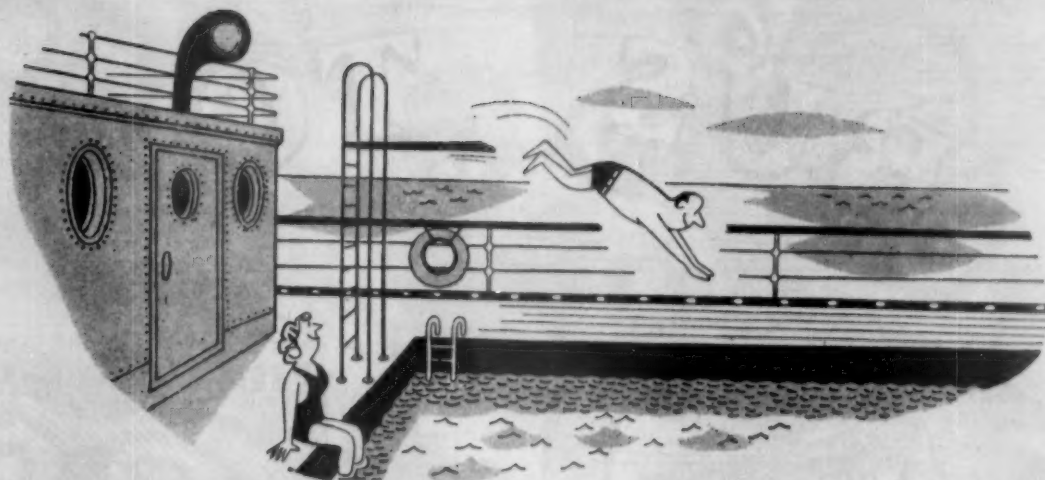
Where is *Julia*? My crie
Is mock'd beneath the vitreate sky
By Goblin Voyses, which do croake
Of Alder-shott, and Basing Stoke—
Shall I search the Under-grounde
Until my *Julia* be found?

Enough of worrie—tho' I may
Doat on *Julia* by day,
'Tis Owl-Time now: and Ile to sleep
And dreme of *Anthea*, who do's keep
Her meetings timely as the Bell
Of Care-feu sounds. Good Night, fare
well!

ANTHONY BRODE



ROY DAVIS



BUS TOP



THIS fine morning shall we go by bus? All the buses seem to be going the other way, and I'm just wondering whether to cross over—mobility being the thing, active currents, never mind direction—when a bus appears.

It sails by. The driver just shook his head.

Find your current—*reculez pour mieux sauter*—gain some outlying height—turn—plunge—

Another bus.

"I'll take three!" cries the conductor.

We shuffle forward, but out of nowhere have sprung three, a youth under a hat pulled down, a dumpling lady, and a man with two sticks: in they hop and off they go.

We're quite angry, especially those who have waited twenty minutes, and haven't all eternity to fritter away, and so forth.

When the next bus arrives there's an iron politeness about getting on—no more surprises from doorways or behind lamp-posts—and plenty of room for all except an old granny sprinting and flapping under an impression till the very last moment that we'll wait.

Buses can be delayed by running towards them in the road, but it's as well to know your bus. No one who had been chased by one—as I was once, in the dusk—would dream of attempting such a manoeuvre.

In any case the poor old thing has a fur-coat and a dog, and about as much chance of getting on any bus as making friends in a field of cows.

I have gone on top because, one way and another, it's freer.

On top, of course, it isn't, as a too early cigar reminds me; and in weather like this one does sigh for sunshiny breezes. "The sky"—as Confucius the Second remarked—"is our Ocean in which, endlessly, we discover beauty, mystery, grace, and light. We should like to spend whole days with it, as the angler who takes his time and his packet of sandwiches by a lake, hoping for trout and catching the rainbow . . ."

"Fzzplzz!"

"Um?"

"Fzzplzz! Neema fzzplzz!"

"Oh, yes, elevenpenny."

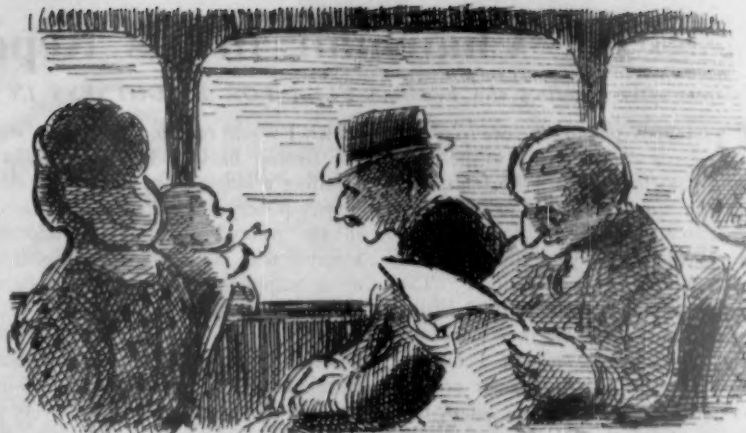
"Ngkiaow."

I'd gladly revert to the open top where, if it rained, up would go umbrellas and tarpaulins would be pinned across. Birds nested there; lovers and tramps would sit under the stars, in the snow.

Oh well, here I am, glassed and roofed, relaxing so far as space and my neighbour allow. He has so spread himself that I bulge over the gangway, but I read the half-page of newspaper thrust in my face, and when that's whisked off I enjoy the sights.

My neighbour decides brusquely to get off, but I'm in no great hurry since he never put himself out for me; I manage to kick him, gently. I am, however, grateful for his window seat, which is now mine.

What delightful things go on at this altitude: a marmalade cat contentedly shut out on a five-inch sill; a girl's hands dancing over the typewriter, but condemned, as we know, to a leaden tune; two scowling giants supporting the gateway to Insurance; the Seventeenth Dynasty of the hair-do—a feminine profile under its shining skep; ladders, planks, poles, and the words "Hardboard Cut to Sighs"; names such as Shoob Dentist and Byron's Gowns; a side-section of an office in which—as in a child's primer—one sees what everybody's up to, from the office-boy to the general manager; rich flower banks; burglar alarms; shoe shop assistants on ladders, and the woman at a coffee table who has happily kicked her shoes off. Opposite some of these



we remain halted so long it seems something must happen; nothing does, except that after a time people stop what they're doing to look. Yet there's just enough hint of drama, of everyday surprise—here's a burglar alarm ringing, but who cares?—to keep us wishing and wondering.

Not that I have the best seat: that is either in front or at the back. The first, requisitioned by school-children or tourists, gives the VistaVision view, the adventure, the swirl of traffic. The back seat is privileged, introspect. There one has an arm rest and, if lucky, the whole seat to oneself; one can cross one's legs, read letters, yawn, hum, observe people coming up in the little mirror, catch rumours from the class and sex war below, examine critically the backs of heads. Most annoying they are sometimes. I *do* like, almost to distraction, the flowery redhead with a chaplet—till she turns. Fat necks arouse in me strange discomforts, possibly because on such a neck once I saw a flea. Had it seen me? I looked away, and back.

There it was. I got up, it vanished. I fled to spend the rest of the day, at a committee meeting, wondering whether I was being most inconveniently bitten. But, of course, this seat's occupied, by a policeman: crime doesn't pay, nor (it is said) does he.

Suddenly everyone stands up. Why? Drawing pins?

God Save the Queen?

Fire?

No, we are passing Lord's.

And we pass a canal, a tired bus sitting by the way, a dog going into a public house; soon we'll reach Oxford Street, De Quincey's "stony-hearted stepmother," but for us the heart, the Derby Day enclosure of all our bus-going and sight-seeing. Sales! Fashions! Trumpeters! Cross my palm, lady! They're off—after pillow-slips!

If only our lids would melt away in the sun. "From the top of a bus, gentlemen," cries Mr. Gladstone still in the popular guide, so winning a last trick from Disraeli whose "land gondolas"—trams—have sought the skies.

G. W. STONIER

The Occasional Yarrow

IT was a mile of greenest grass
Whereon a little stream did pass
The Occasional Yarrow.

Only in every seventh year
Did this pretty stream appear
The Occasional Yarrow,

Wading and warbling in its beds
Of grass decked out with daisy
heads

The Occasional Yarrow.

There in my seventh year and this
sweet stream's
I wandered happily (as happy gleams
The Occasional Yarrow).

Though now to memory alone
I can call up thy lovely form
Occasional Yarrow,

I still do bless thy Seventh days
Bless thy sweet name and all who praise
The Occasional Yarrow.

STEVIE SMITH

The Chairman, in his Report, Said . . .

Written after reading the headline **PLEA FOR BRIGHTNESS IN ANNUAL REPORT** in "*The Times*"

BEFORE putting before you the gross trading profits of the company for the year 1954, folks, I am sure you would wish me to say a few words about an incident of a humorous nature which befell your Chairman as I was wending my way hither. The incident is fully described in the copy of this Report which has been circulated with the accounts, so that I do not propose to burden you again at this time with the details of the affair, but only to add that this makes the fifth comical contretemps in which one or other of your directors has been involved during the past financial year—an improvement of over 40 per cent on the figures for 1953. Laughter, properly directed and controlled, is a valuable asset, and it will be the constant concern of the Board in the future, as in the past, to promote it by every means within their power.

Turning to the combined profit and loss account, the gross trading profit of £2,617,206 represents an increase of £50,542 over the previous year's working, and I am sure you will agree with the Board's view that this, in the prevailing conditions, is whizzo. Production of hot re-rolled slag has been well maintained and the slight falling-off of stripped sheets (a phrase to which your Chairman has devoted considerable care) is of a seasonal nature and not calculated to spoil your directors' sleep. Pig-iron, you may be amused to hear, dropped with a clang—to 3,886 tons, a new low record in the history of your rollicking Company.

I have some further figures here about liquid assets, provision for depreciation, and the writing-down of capital,

which I would read to you if there was the faintest likelihood of your understanding a single word of it. All this jiggery-pokery is in any case included in the printed copy of the Report, together with my customary complaints about crippling taxation which I have this year presented in a jocular style that will, I hope, commend itself to shareholders. I propose therefore, with your permission, to take as read about fourteen paragraphs of balance sheetery and re-rolled platitudes and proceed at once to the only item in which our shareholders—whose presence, may I say, at our Annual General Meetings, even in such limited numbers, is a source of genuine amazement to the Board—take the slightest interest. We recommend, in short, a final dividend of 18 per cent on the Ordinary Stock, which with the interim dividend of 15 per cent already declared makes, as nearly as I can work it out in my present carefree mood, a total of 33 per cent. What do you think of that, boys and girls?

The Board feels, and I am sure that shareholders in their dumb way will agree, that this is a result which reflects the greatest credit on our General Manager and the loyal and efficient service of the whole staff. All the same, I don't know what the devil I am thinking about, thanking the staff in this way out of their proper turn. Gratitude to the staff comes at the end, as you will see if you turn to your printed copies of the Report. I have first to tell you how sorry you will be to hear that Mr. O. P. Cromer, who has served your Board unsparingly for seventy-five years, has at last decided to retire. It is not easy

to be bright at such a moment, but I know Mr. Cromer will not mind my saying in his presence—for he is as deaf as a post, and will continue to wag his head and make deprecatory gestures whatever I may say—I know he will forgive me for saying that if ever a man deserved to retire, he does. He carries with him into retirement the good wishes of the Company and a pension of £1,250, which will be a charge on the Consolidated Fund—though not, I am sure you will agree with me in thinking, for long.

I have also to record, with genuine regret, the loss of our Overseas Manager, whose broad humanity, ripe judgment and profound knowledge of pig-iron and cold smelting processes, particularly in the field of pressed bolts and tubings, will be greatly missed. He had a genius for friendship, which made him an ideal man to send overseas.

Turning, in accordance with the agreed policy of your Board, to brighter things, I am sure you would wish me, on your behalf, to thank the whole staff, which I have already done. It only remains, therefore, for me to say that their efforts have contributed in no small measure to the satisfactory account of our undertakings which I have been able to lay before you. Or, to put it another way, if none of them had done any of the work they are paid for, we should have sacked the lot—and well they know it. These considerations encourage me to hope that next year, provided nothing happens to reduce our profits, I shall be in a position to entertain you with an even brighter and breezier review.

The Report and Accounts were adopted amid scenes of unparalleled gaiety.
H. F. ELLIS



No Cold Shoulder Here

"A Broughty Ferry girl was short of money when asked to help Dr. Barnardo's Homes, but willingly gave the last few coins from her handbag. On Sunday her door bell rang, and the girl from whom she had bought tickets presented her with the prize—a beautiful woollen shrug."

Dundee Courier and Advertiser

Prayers at Lake Como

By ANTHONY CARSON

MAGIC Carpets Travel Agency spread its net all over Europe, with palazzi in Italy, chalets in Switzerland, schlosses in Germany and two or three house-party châteaux in France. The main railway stations were staffed by Magic Carpet uniformed men, the special trains were accompanied by Magic Carpet couriers, and each main centre had its chief Magic Carpets representative, who lived in style in a schloss or palazzo, waving as gaily as possible to the guests. Under him were a staff of assistant representatives who supervised hotels and took excursions to glaciers, monasteries or near-by volcanoes. The client was met at the station, and from that moment until the return, all he or she had to do was to knit, eat or write letters home. There was also a religious department which ensured a stream of foot-loose clergymen to conduct morning prayers in the main residences and keep an eye on jamborees.

I had tried everything in Magic Carpets, from stuffing programmes in folders (Come and have a real Magic Carpets Get-together in Interlaken. Nine days with bath, fifteen guineas), shifting sacks of coal, and shouting at coach-loads of Yorkshire men through a megaphone. I had had a shot at being a courier on the Swiss run, sleeping on the luggage rack, and hardly glimpsing a mountain through ranks of women with hard large hats waving passports. After that I had been given Italy, and herded people through cathedrals and down into catacombs. On one occasion I had a hundred and twenty clients in a grotto, and even got them all out. But it was restless work and extremely unsettling to flit backwards and forwards from Tottenham Court Road to Vesuvius every other fortnight, and I wanted to settle down.

I approached the movements officer of Magic Carpets and put forward my plan. "Certainly," he said. "I don't see why you shouldn't have a try. Your record is fairly straight, except for the windows you smashed in Verona, and those women at Brussels. Of course you will have to start as an assistant. I will try to get you posted to Como. It is quite a nice lake, and the clients are mostly out of the top drawer." I

thanked him and hung about the office sweeping out the accounts department with the chief representative from Ankara. It was a democratic firm. Finally it was arranged for me to go to Como, and I was handed free railway passes to Montreux and Como. "You can take your time getting there," said the director. "Drop in at one of the chalets and stay the night. You'll pick up something about the organization." I set off for Montreux, and arrived by the glittering blue lake in the early morning. Everything was clean, new and spotless, and the mountains had just been washed and polished by a million charwomen. I took a taxi to the chalet and presented myself. "Splendid," said the chief representative. "Come in and have breakfast." He showed me into the dining-room, which had a superb view of the lake. As I entered I could hear that sort of stiff

rustle one hears in hotels in Bexhill, and women in white jerseys swooped back on their porridge. Two clergymen rose, and one said to the other "Come on, Dennis, ping-pong," and soon I could hear the busy patter of the ball in the sports room. After breakfast I met a man called Mathers whom I had known on the Swiss run. He used to be a very swift seducer (which one had to be on that run), but now he looked absolutely miserable. "Hullo, Mathers," I cried. He winced. "Don't talk so loud," he said; "come outside." We went outside on the veranda and stared down at the golden spangles shivering in the lake. "This place is hell," he said, after a while. "But women come here," I said. "They come here all right. It's quite impossible because of the matron. And there's cricket and lectures. And all the directors come here. But I warn you,



"Suits both of 'em, eh?"



"He just sits there waiting for September and commercial television."

Como is worse. Much worse." He waved me good-bye at the station. "I'm going to ask for Pompeii," he shouted, as the train drew out.

I reported at the palazzo at Como. It was an enormous dilapidated hotel where diplomats used to stay for those idyllic conferences before the war. D'Annunzio, it was said, had a violent love affair there and crammed a lady's room with lilies. A financier had shot himself in a magnificent bathroom, and there was a strange story about a prima donna in the gardens. Now nearly everybody there wore flannels and cretonne. The chief representative, a

plump man in a good nylon shirt whom I distinctly remembered polishing the door-handles at the main office in London two winters ago, looked at me in amazement. "But I know nothing about this," he cried. "We're fully staffed. You'll have to do excursions. And for heaven's sake keep away from the palazzo as much as you can. Hardly let me see your face in it, or you'll get me the sack." "Why?" I asked, slightly amazed. "You know perfectly well," cried the representative. "Messing about with women. This is a dreadful week here. All the directors have suddenly arrived, and three bishops

from the Tyrol." I promised him I would try to keep away, and then slipped off to conduct excursions.

The most popular excursion was to a place near Tremezzo where Mussolini had been shot at. It was very popular with the old ladies, who stayed at the site for hours, rustling their luncheon parcels, and looking for stale blood. After the third excursion I invented a bone and planted it under a dwarf palm. "Mr. Carson," cried one of the old ladies, "I've found a bone." She returned with rosy cheeks and shared my table for a few days at the palazzo before she returned to Hastings.

During one of the luncheons I noticed a girl seated four tables away. She was dressed in white, and had black, snapping eyes. When she got up her legs twinkled through the dining-room like swords. She was a challenge, whatever Mathers had said. I thought about her for a few days and then approached her in the vestibule. "How are you enjoying the sunshine?" I asked. "Isn't it lovely?" she said. "Do you like boating?" I asked. "Certainly," she said. We walked down to the palazzo jetty and got hold of a canoe, minus ten per cent. Then she seated herself at one end and I at the other, and I paddled the canoe out into the sparkling blue holiday of the lake. "We'll get away as far as possible from the palazzo," I hinted. "As far as possible," she agreed. "I really wish I'd gone to Ostend." We paddled miles out into the lake, and then drifted in the lapping luxury of the water. We began to sunbathe, and before we knew how it happened we were suddenly wearing no clothes at all. The sun laughed down like a lazy giant, and time was forgotten and the world was a blue dream. Then we fell asleep and I knew nothing until I felt Mabel pulling at my arm. "Wake up," she said. "We're right under the veranda of the palazzo." "Nonsense," I said, "we're miles away." "It's the current," she said, "and they're all looking at us." I sat up, and immediately recognized the palazzo veranda. There was a smudge of people peering down. I seized hold of the paddle and slashed for the jetty. "I knew something like this was going to happen," said the chief representative, handing me my passes. "All the directors were there and it was evening prayers."

Not as a Total Stranger

By RICHARD GORDON

BY now I have run across most of the types composing the medical profession, from the highly academic to the highly alcoholic. Except one—the dedicated young doctor, a fellow who could be easily spotted by any layman with a library list.

He is generally a Scotsman or a Welshman, because Englishmen, having no quaint ways of hiding their ignorance, are never taken seriously as doctors; and everyone knows that Irish doctors aren't born but rise professionally like Venus from a sea of stout. Americans are the most dedicated of the lot, as they become dedicated very easily about anything. It is simple to understand why the young lad wandering barefoot behind the kindly, old, insanitary Kentucky physician feels that he *must* devote his whole life to medicine, particularly if he gets to hear of the old boy's income.

Dedication, except to sport, is discouraged in the English medical schools and made impossible by the English medical syllabus. The boy burning with medical ideals for five years on a school-room bench arrives to start work for his first M.B. exam., uplifted by the thought of at last joining the devoted white-clad army in their ceaseless battle against disease and human misery. He finds himself faced with a vertical board on which three weights joined by bits of string run over Meccano wheels, with instructions to demonstrate the parallelogram of forces. This is, in fact, the most difficult part of the medical course, as the weights keep flying off like a South American bolas. By the time he has recovered them several times from among his fellow-students, one of the crusty old physics demonstrators asks why he hasn't got a job as an office boy instead of wasting everyone's time in a medical school.

The dedicated student may find more satisfaction in the zoology lab, but cutting up a cockroach is a barren exercise to a youth who has seen himself doing cholecystectomies since the age of six. When he rises in the evolutionary scale at the end of his first year from dogfish, frog, and rabbit to the human frame, he may expect his ideals to be more widely appreciated. This is not so. He is taught anatomy by anatomists,

physiology by physiologists, and pharmacology by pharmacologists, who regard any suggestion that this knowledge is to be used in the treatment of sick human beings as rather vulgar.

At last the dedicated young man leaves the labs and enters the hospital wards. The devoted white-clad army is now all round him, telling him to keep off the newly-polished floor, take yesterday's specimens down to the pathology department, not to use the pink cake of soap which is reserved specially for Sister, and to be a decent chap and give the house surgeon's car a shove to get it started. He will be gratified to find that human misery is everywhere, lying in bed smoking pipes while simultaneously listening to Mrs. Dale's Diary on the headphones and reading the *Daily Mirror*. If he approaches the bedside in his new white coat with an air of deep professional earnestness he will certainly

be taken for the hospital barber. If he comes humbly to learn the healing art from these poor stricken bodies that he might prepare himself to cure others, he will discover that the whole ward drops into a mysterious coma on his approach. The healing art is anyway severely restricted to the hours from ten to twelve and two to four, being interrupted for bedpans and lunch.

Dedicated young doctors in films are for some reason always surgeons—physicians are thought either cynical old fee-splitters or not really doctors at all because they don't dress up. I admit that surgeons exist who believe they have been placed on earth by God to save mankind, but this attitude of mind is so common in newly-elected Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons that no one takes any notice.


Old Blood and Thunder, the man who taught me surgery, often demanded during his ward rounds why the devil some poor muddled pupil had ever decided to study the subject at all. Usually he received no reply, because a student frizzling in the glare of his personality was generally wondering exactly the same thing. But one of our class, a thin, pale man who rarely spoke, murmured one day that he "wanted to save lives." "Then why," Blood and Thunder roared, "didn't you join the ruddy fire brigade?"

Of really dedicated students I can remember only one—a dignified balding youth who was already beginning to look like the patent-medicine advertiser's idea of a doctor. Even when cutting up his first earthworm he declared that he had heard the call; but it must have been a hearty shout, because after five years' struggle with his first examination he took a job as an insurance agent. "Sorry and all that," explained the Dean, throwing him out of the medical school as kindly as possible, "but you've just got to face it. You'd simply never make a doctor."



"This is more the effect I want you to try for at this point, Miss Fonteyn."

"Miss R. J. B.— wishes to thank the two ladies who, on Friday, graciously helped her to a taxi after injuring her hand in Willis Street."—*The Wellington (N.Z.) Evening Post*
Least they could do.



Fashion at the Summit



RECOLLECTED in tranquillity, the week of the autumn fashion openings in Paris had its poetic moments: the lonely little man spraying himself with *Fath de Fath* perfume from the *bouteille maison*; the feminine greetings performed to a formula—the squeal and wave across the salon, the ecstatic clasping of both hands, the careful, so very careful, laying of cheeks together and kissing the air.

At Balmain's, there was Marlene Dietrich sitting in the full afternoon sunlight heightened by a thousand candelabra power, so different from the dim cabaret lights of midnight London; Marlene with blonde suit and hair, scarlet hat and lips, and beside her the perfect foil—a homely body in grey worsted suiting with black handbag and sensible black shoes. There was Lolobrigida, rounding the Rond Point in full rig, with a trail of three dinghies behind her: hairdresser, maid, and language instructress. And in the Place de la Concorde, on Sunday afternoon, there were the photographer's models in topless evening dresses, posturing under the fountains' spray. For the Christmas numbers?

Paris in collection time vies with Geneva in conference time as a city of dreadful babel. But apart from the tabled agenda—dress shows from morning till midnight—there are always the little alleviating incidents, rehearsed and unrehearsed: rehearsed, surely, the opening of the casement at Jacques Heim's to reveal at a mansard window across the courtyard the face of a peeping Tom—a face that, on second glance, resolved itself into a cardboard mask; the dead rabbit hanging from a pouch pocket in the first suit shown in Manguin's "*Collection Amazone*" which, on second glance, resolved itself into a real dead rabbit; the real live Yorkshire terrier, yapping out of an ocelot muff carried by one of Heim's models—the first muff-dog of the season.

Unrehearsed, the midnight fusing of the lights at Maggy Rouff's reception, just as the pink champagne was flowing. The four great salons of the house in the Avenue Matignon which once belonged to Marie Antoinette's Comte Ferson were plunged into utter darkness, then lit by hundreds of flickering fireflies—the matches and cigarette lighters of Madame Maggy's guests.

Another mansion in the Avenue Matignon, that of Jean Dessès, was at one time the home of engineer Alexandre Eiffel; and there, watching the Dessès collection, was the happily beaming face of Miki Sekers, another man to engineer an effective outrage in Paris; Sekers' fabrics, designed in Cumberland (some by Oliver Messel) are now being woven in Lyons so that they escape the French Government's near-embargo on imported textiles. Thus have English fabrics stormed the fashion summit. They are being used by many leading French designers, for these silk and mohair mixtures have the featherweight softness and warmth looked for by *couturiers* to-day; while the gold yarn introduced into some of the Cumberland woollens and tweeds is one of the chief fabric interests of the season. Gone, quite gone, this year are the tough, rough, knobbly, shaggy-dog weaves; and the hairiest fabric used is no more hairy than the down on a peach's cheek.

Far from Fleet Street, home, and mother, the British journalists responded to the spirit of Paris while applying themselves to the letter of their job. The spirit moved in wondrous ways. It moved one fashion editress to spend five thousand francs on having a blonde streak bleached into her naturally blonde hair; with no more effect than if a black cat were to brush her whiskers with mascara. Yet no result was a good result compared with some of the piebald effects achieved by experimenting brunettes. The cult of the streak,

however, is not followed by this year's model girls. They cultivate the chignon (the erstwhile bun). The chignon, built high, built low, or swathed sideways, is svelte and soignée and has the merit of very low maintenance costs. It was noticeable that the mannequins at those houses coiffured by the *maestro* Antoine were exceptions to the long-haired rule. They had very short cuts, crisply waved or curled, often with side-brushed fringes. The great house and fortune of Antoine has been built on hair-styles more shifting than chignons.

If the hairdressers dislike the trend towards chignons, the milliners are even more pained by the prevalent custom of going hatless in Paris. In their salons they hang the Peynet poster, featuring his famous little lovers: "*Mais, comment te plaire?*" she sobs, tears running down her cheeks. "*Porte un chapeau!*" he sternly replies. In the collections every model is shown with a hat. For cocktails and theatre it is not always strictly speaking a hat: a *soufflé* whipped up out of feathers or fur; a charlotte ruched in satin. Svend, the Danish milliner, has thrown into the breach a company of *Chapeaux Chocs*, by which he means Shock Hats. Born of the beret, brilliantly dyed, they go over one ear and curve out at the other; or sweep backwards as asymmetrical turbans; or pour over one eye. But these Shock Hats caused less sensation than those of de Givenchy. His are flying saucers which scarcely seem to touch the head and swirl far out at the back; and enormous tulle-draped space-hoops, with a rose at poop or prow.

The tall slim silhouette, confirmed by both Balenciaga and Dior, needs balancing with larger hats than those we have been wearing. Both these two—the most influential designers—favour substantial creations, Dior's being high in the crown, fez or turban-like, having the Eastern flavour which seasons his whole collection. Madame Geneviève Fath

shows delicious confections, Edwardian in size and sentiment, potpourris of velvet and flowers. Janette Colombier, it is true, keeps her hats small and close-fitting; but it was she who first introduced the little half-hats, and she has at least gone the whole hat now.

Fur hats of all kinds appear at all houses: flat fur hats as big as tea-trays, fur cosies and sugar basins, fur muffins and crumpets. These go with the fur collars, cuffs, and coat linings . . . Paris is preparing for a cold winter. Everything makes for warmth: cross-over, buttoning-on stoles; camisole jackets fitting tightly over dresses; skirts in two or three tiers; one layer is never enough. The Balenciaga tunic itself is an overgarment. Balmain shows tweed redingotes, warm enough to wear without an overcoat; and Fath's coat-dresses, fur collared and cuffed, appear to be overcoats until you notice they have no buttons and are zip-fastened at

the back. Everywhere the throat is swathed, following through the swathed line of the beltless dresses which, with jackets, have taken the place of suits; not before martini time may the neck be revealed. Balmain has a fur evening dress, completely fashioned out of white broadtail; Lanvin has quilted eider-down capes, and evening coats of glossy leather lined with swansdown; de Givenchy lines kid-skin jackets with swansdown; Fath is content to line mink with mink.

That is fashion at the summit, at the source. Looking back on the collections as a whole, then forward to the Autumn, it is possible to get a mind's eye view of the symbolic elegant woman as she steps out on the day the frost cuts down the dahlias. She will look tall, but it may be an illusion of high-crown hat, chignon, and long umbrella. She will be in black or some subdued, understated colour, such as mole; but her hat

will be as brilliant as the last leaf on the sumach. Her dress (she will not wear a suit) will be shorter than heretofore. The waist will be indicated but unbelted, the bust inconspicuous to the point of absence. Her straight tunic coat will widen at its rounded shoulders through some device of collar, cape, or cut. It will be seven-eighths in length, with long slits up the sides.

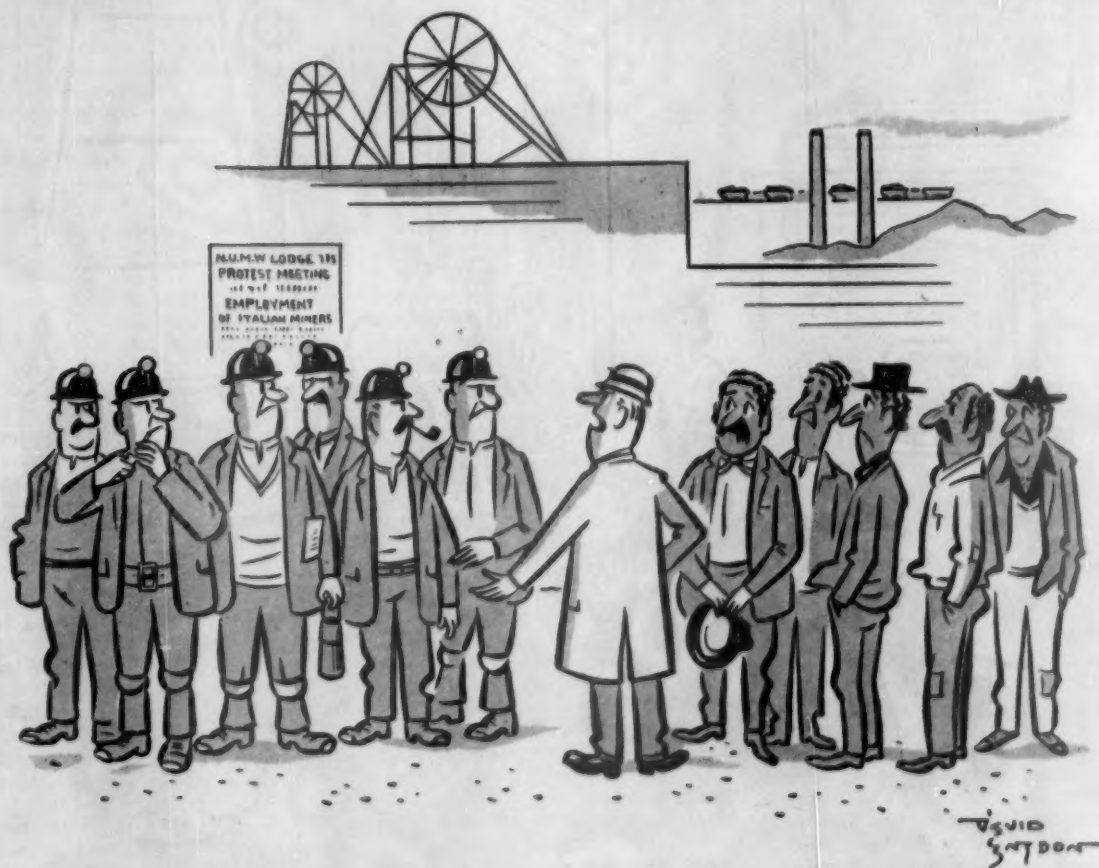
Her shoes will be narrow and pointed, her gloves long and softly wrinkling. She may have a muff; she might have a Yorkshire terrier. But if she does, she will have to discard her mutation poodle.

ALISON ADBURGHAM

Where Will it End?

"BREWERY MEN STOP WORK"
"TUGMEN VOTE TO GO BACK"
"TYSON STRIKES"

Evening Standard



"Okay, okay. But think what the Colliery Choir would sound like augmented . . ."



Jobs for the Boys

THERE are now fewer people out of work in Britain than at any time since the setting-up of labour exchanges. Last month the figure stood at 184,900, about 0.8 per cent of the labour force, which compares very favourably (or unfavourably if your economic thinking is determinist) with unemployment percentages of approximately 3 and 4 in the cases of Germany and the United States.

There are also more jobs going begging than at any time in our history—something like 500,000 of them. There are labour shortages in nearly every trade and industry: we are short of labour in the new industries upon which our future as a manufacturing and exporting nation depends. We are suffering from over-employment.

During the war, when we talked of homes and jobs for heroes, an employment level of 99 per cent was never mentioned in serious conversation. The chief aim of the Beveridge Report was a reduction of unemployment "to not more than 3 per cent, as compared with the 10 to 22 per cent experienced in Britain between the wars"; the economists who wrote academically about the dangers of over-employment considered a 97½ per cent employment level as on the high side. To-day we have virtually no structural unemployment (a little in Lancashire) and less than one per cent of seasonal and "frictional" unemployment. And we are wondering whether or not our economic difficulties, declining exports and reserves, justify the use of the word "crisis."

If the country cannot pay its way now, when production is near its maximum and the internal burden of welfare is near its minimum, the outlook must seem rather bleak. Any sudden squall in the economic weather threatens to push the ship of state well below the Plimsoll Line. Any major industrial stoppage would make us all walk the plank.

It can, of course, be argued that strikes have caused our recent economic setbacks, but all the available figures show that loss of time through strikes is much lower in Britain than in other



industrial countries. The United States, for example, has lost six times more working days per man than Britain over the past five years. Last year—a poor one here—we lost one hour per worker, while in the U.S. strikes cost 3½ hours per worker.

It can also be argued, and much more cogently, that our difficulties are the result of over-employment, that too many jobs for too few workers have given rise to inflation, steered goods intended for export into the home market, increased imports and saddled the country with a wages system devoid of incentives. But there can be no voluntary return to the economics of the "good old days": there will never be a reduction in anyone's wages (unthinkable!) unless every dirty weather blows up and puts five per cent of us out of work.

Ruinous Overheads

THERE'S plenty of craft still left in the country but little skill. In fact you have to be very cunning to find it. If you own a horse you can wear the poor animal out looking for a blacksmith. A forge has become a mirage in a desert of garages. And if you find one it is as likely as not that the smith knows how to work an acetylene welder but hasn't a shoe in the place.

But that chase is nothing to the marathon you have to undergo if you should be unfortunate enough to own a thatched roof. Thatchers have become almost mythical beasts. And though August is the ideal month for having a roof repaired, it is not the ideal month to be chasing up and down hot and dusty lanes searching for the elusive craftsman who is so well aware of his rarity value that he's become most dragonish to behold. You make a mistake if you ask him to come and do some work for you. It is more tactful to beg him to do you a favour. He will then inform you casually that he has at least three years' work on his hands. Indeed his independence protrudes like the spike on a unicorn.

Even if you succeed in getting him to have a look at your roof it doesn't



How can the 500,000 vacancies in industry and agriculture be filled? By importing labour? Through automation? The unions are considering both, and are expected to report favourably on neither. But facts must be faced, even if they read as cynically as this extract from a recent leading article: "Our chief competitors still have unemployment levels of 3 and 4 per cent... It is inevitable that they should find costs easier to control." In other words, they have a decent amount of unemployment, and we don't.

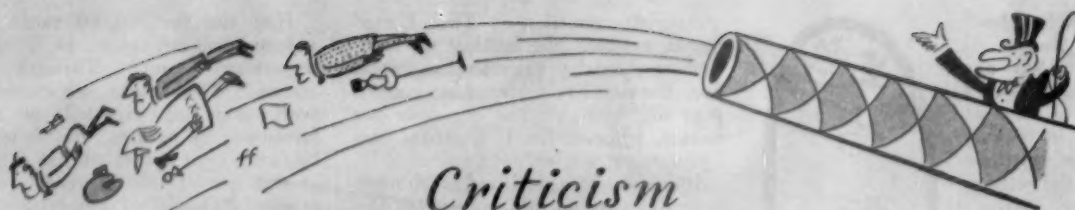
Now that the iron curtain is rising it might be a good idea to think in terms of Russian immigrants instead of Italians, Maltese and Greeks. The U.S.S.R. could easily spare half a million or so. But no economists or journalists, please!

MAMMON

mean that he will undertake the work. A slip on your part will send him scurrying. It may be you hurt his feelings by daring to ask when he could begin, or thoughtlessly inquiring when he might finish. And of course it is understood that although you have driven him to your house so that he can gauge the number of squares of thatch required and work out how many niches of reed will be wanted, at no time may these negotiations come to a point. He is allowed to work out his estimate, you are forbidden to ask the answer. He will sulk if you do so and let you know that he was only doing you a favour anyhow. Nowadays an honest man doesn't have to work for his living. He does a job only if it interests him. Bearing this in mind, the best line with thatchers is to use craft in order to obtain their skill. Try the challenge approach, such as "Two other thatchers have turned the job down because those dormy windows there make the work so tricky." If that fails try flattery: "Is that roof on the new inn outside Tavistock your work, sir? I must say it's a masterpiece in your most mature style."

It has just cost me £400 to thatch a cottage let at 3s. 6d. a week. It is as incongruous as a diamond tiara on the head of a beggar. Perhaps the Monopoly Commission should visit the countryside? Though if they did I'm afraid that many of us who seem witless would then go thatchless altogether. That would be a pity, for though witless, we are not without guile, and know that there's nothing so economical as thatch when the house is insured against fire to the full.

RONALD DUNCAN



Criticism

BOOKING OFFICE

Cooling Passion

I AM distressed to find that I have suddenly gone off detective stories. It may be that I have missed the good ones. It may be that the form is worked out, as some experts say. Yet Mr. Maurice Richardson in *The Observer* manages to find a few worth reading in most batches, and *The Times Literary Supplement* Special Number devoted to them, though a trifle elegiac in tone, gave the impression that plenty of life remained. Perhaps I am suffering from youthful surfeit. In my day I have finished a detective novel on the way home from the library, sitting on small walls outside houses, leaning against lamp-posts, standing on one leg on the kerb. The detective novel played the same part in my early life as *Good Works* or *Girls* in the lives of my fellow non-manual workers. Now I tend to pick up some other kind of book. Surely the least that one can expect of a vice is that it should be adhesive.

One theory is that whodunits are essentially balderdash. Reading them appeals to bishops and Prime Ministers because it lets them boast of behaving like the lowbrows that, since leaving the university, they really are. This explanation absurdly assumes that my standards of mental play have risen during early middle-age. Is a truer explanation that the more sophisticated fans were right, that the whodunit is really a drama playing out the conflicts of our time, that it is the epos of urban man or that it is pure problem insulated from quality and quantity? This would more sensibly make the whodunit above my head: once I tried to keep up, but to-day I relax with Redbrick fiction.

Many of the stories that still strike me as successful are American. While the tried English favourites continue to please their publics by accurate reproduction of past successes, and a few violent eccentrics pretend they are writing stories of detection when the whole emphasis is on the non-detective element (the very entertaining Pamela Branch, for example, though her themes are homicidal, should really be listed under humour), the Americans never

forget they are there to keep the reader on the move. There may be an initial mystery, but the story is never held up for ratiocination. Then there is the wonderful American police force. In England the police are either comic yokels or private detectives inexplicably on the strength, first editions and all, very far from plain clothes police. In



America the police form a triangle with the villain and the forces of righteousness, which are often oddly represented by a journalist.

Another American advantage is the absence of heroes who could conceivably be called namby-pamby. Moriarty would have made a good American sleuth; so would Dr. Fu Manchu. English writers try to acclimatize the type over here, but one finds it hard to believe in a reporter on a local paper in Bedfordshire who uses a lighter to extract eyewitness stories, or a private inquiry agent who fights his way in and out of penthouses owned by night-club tycoons. Mr. Graham Greene's man in *The End of the Affair* seems nearer to probability. Of course, for the English reader, the American writer starts with the advantage that anything he says is credible. He is talking about a country as fabulous as Zululand or Cockayne. Even if the plot is dull the extraordinary background will hold the attention. Murder in Brixton or the Fulham Road is never far from cemeteries and

mourners: one cannot quite forget that one has probably sat near a murderer on some London bus. Murder on a ranch in Arizona, in a Philadelphia night-club or on one of those trains that provide time for social life is just good fun.

The other great American advantage, speed of narrative, has improved English whodunits enormously. It is rare now to trail round a small market town seeing every grain of dust in the lawyer's chambers: the emphasis on long, slow drinks has shifted to short, quick drinks. The chief obstacle to a complete streamlining of the English whodunit is the sedateness of the English legal system. It is no good having your characters rushing about Surrey in fast cars, with brains revolving like ultracentrifuges, if, when they come up with the solution, all that happens is a good deal of writing in long-hand and ten adjournments until the Director of Public Prosecutions is ready to proceed.

Whodunit writers have learnt that only an occasional reader is as interested in the identity of the murderer as they are, and provide much more in the way of trimmings, like desperate milk bar proprietors who cram in more and more fruit machines and juke boxes. Some of the best architectural descriptions, the most amusing conversations and the finest grotesque inventions in modern fiction have been in detective novels; but now the original stock, the novel itself, has come alive again. There may not be better novels published to-day than twenty years ago; we are too near to the flood to know. There are certainly more kinds of successful novel published. It is no longer necessary to camouflage skill in manipulating plot or inventing farce with blood and police whistles. This may be why I find myself more and more rarely picking up whodunits. I very much hope it is not and that soon some lucky find will lure me back to my addiction.

R. G. G. PRICE

1965

A Sign of the Times. Robert Kee. Eyre and Spottiswoode 12/6

The events of this most amusing novel take place in 1965, rather less, that is,

than half-way to 1984. No basic change has come to the condition of civilization; licensing hours in Sydney are unaltered, it is still necessary to change a pound for a five-minute taxi-ride; but the rapprochement between the two sides of the Iron Curtain that followed the Eisenhower-Bulganin Agreement has, inevitably, led to more international interference with personal liberty.

The story concerns the efforts of Leo Trafford, a liberal pro-German ex-editor, to escape transportation under the compulsory clauses of the Maladjusted Persons Act. Mr. Kee tells it both wittily and excitingly, and has realized his wonderful assortment of characters, ranging from the super-Civil Servants of the Inter-Governmental Regroupment Agency for Maladjusted Persons to the arty patrons of the Clement Attlee public-house in South Kensington, with as thorough conviction as he has realized his period.

B. A. Y.

Living in the Present. John Wain. *Secker and Warburg*, 12/6

When Edgar Banks decides to escape into death from sordid Metropolitan school-mastering he thinks it would be a pity not to use his suicide constructively, so he plans to murder an unpleasant neo-Fascist. After a number of farcical failures in London and Switzerland, he is restored to the love of life by a wonderful, wonderful girl: finally, although he has walked out of his job, a Dickensian change of heart in his headmaster makes all well with his work.

In *Hurry On Down*, escape had some social significance; the hero was attempting to live outside the class-structure. Here it is simply the flight that has traditionally opened adventure stories; planning suicide is as good a jumping-off point as meeting one's double. What is fled from is described with the modish disgust that characterizes fiction by young dons. Although the people are preposterous and the writing is undistinguished, a good deal of the fun is fresh and gay. The first half, at least, has something that has almost died out of the contemporary novel—inventive farce.

R. G. G. P.

The Children of Light. Gerald Sykes. *Heinemann*, 12/6

The novel of ideas is not a genre in which transatlantic writers, however Europeanized, excel; and Mr. Sykes, attempting to epitomise the social, intellectual, and political conflicts now being fought out on American soil, succeeds only in starting too many hares: many of them purely mechanical. His hero, fashionably middle-aged, is a former "geologist, businessman, soldier" and roving ambassador in the Middle East, who has developed liberal views and settled down in his Ohio home-town to write a book on "psychopolitics." His third wife, a painter of "rare distinction," adores him like "a child rejoicing in her

daddy's strength," but he is virulently hated by the son of his first marriage, a young neo-Fascist attorney running as Republican candidate in an election campaign.

The struggle between them is the ostensible theme of the novel; but the author hopelessly complicates the issue by importing, also, other symptomatic figures such as a homosexual dramatist; an ex-Communist, ex-editor of a belligerent highbrow review; a psychotic nightclub co-ed; and a French undergraduette.

J. M.-R.

Snake Wine. Patrick Anderson. *Chatto and Windus*, 16/-

This account of a couple of years on the English staff of the University of Singapore is, at least, a change from the ordinary literary report on academic experience overseas, with its passion to understand. Here the students, the dons, the vegetation, the racial problems and the bars exist only to serve the author's ego. I thought to begin with that Mr. Anderson was the most unlikeable autobiographer I had met since J. R. Clynes, but gradually his world became real as he hurled his prose at it in a frenzy of loneliness and boredom. There is a little of the hypnotic power of Denton Welch, though Mr. Anderson is less delicately perceptive and does not write so elegantly. What seems odd is the recurrent complaint of not being able to find anything to do, as in other books by modern dons, who, when not lecturing, seem just to sit about degenerating. The Chekhov-and-hangover school of academic writing is a curious change from the tradition of tremendous walks and fourteen hours' reading a day.

R. G. G. P.

Venusberg: Agents and Patients. Anthony Powell. *Heinemann*, Uniform Edition, 12/6 each

The cool, elegant humour of Anthony Powell's early novels inspired several imitators. Despite this, a new generation of readers will not fail to feel again the impact that *Venusberg* and *Agents and*

Patients made upon the discriminating when first published in the 'thirties. The surface brilliance of the writing remains untarnished. The wit, wisely directed not at passing events but at the unremitting human comedy, is ever pertinent.

For a novel the passage of twenty years is the severest testing time. *Venusberg*, with its bitter-sweet love story set in a Baltic capital, and *Agents and Patients*, a delicious satire on the pre-Hitlerian 'thirties, concerning two knaves and a fool with money, will always be read by those who require in their humour the bite of intelligence and demand that wit be unaltered by sentiment.

O. M.

Caroline Matilda. G. V. Blackstone. *Heinemann*, 15/-

The story of George III's youngest sister, set down clearly, as it is here, by the impact of its characters on each other and the dramatic happenings of their lives, almost provides a good novel ready-made, though a more practised hand might have won a little sympathy for some of them. As it is they seem just a singularly nasty lot of human beings. Caroline Matilda, bundled at fifteen into the arms of the repulsive Christian VII of Denmark, exploited by a handsome adventurer who used her love as his way to fortune, might easily have qualified as a heroine; she was sensual, often foolish, sometimes cruel, but loved her children, was generous in her passion for the callous Struensee, and died at twenty-three, probably poisoned by an agent of her husband's step-mother. She, Queen Juliana, must have been the nastiest of them all for, when fate forbade her to provide herself with a ring-side seat, she watched the disgusting brutalities of Struensee's execution through a telescope!

B. E. S.

A German Officer. Serge Groussard. *Hamish Hamilton*, 10/6

In this work of a French author, a typical German army officer is portrayed with Prussian precision. The continual flashbacks build up a character fanatic in its loyalty to the ideologies of Nazi Germany. On his appearance before the denazification boards he justifies his cruelties as the unquestionable task of a German officer performing his duty. He reminds the fourteen jurymen of their good fortune in satisfying the occupying powers of their non-association with the Nazi régime, and asks them if they actively resisted Nazism. In the end, one is inclined to feel sorry for this ex-officer who is forced to swallow his pride. He suffers many privations and undertakes menial employment to eke out a frugal existence.

A. V.

Frontiers of Astronomy. Fred Hoyle. *Heinemann*, 25/-

Mr. Fred Hoyle whose recent book *The Nature of the Universe* is still the most inspiring of short guides for the



common reader, now gives us an encyclopaedic work, equally fascinating but making severer demands on the reader's knowledge of mathematics and physics. He is a modest writer, this forceful and gifted man, being always careful to present his well-documented conclusions as "for our time," indeed already he has out-dated one of his former opinions—that the sun moved originally with a twin star whose vast single explosion shot the planetary matter far out into space.

But as ever, this picture he paints—of stars and planets tearing forever into space forever stretching, with hydrogen the master element of all universes, and all so steady in a perpetual balance and burrowing—is one of great emotional benefit, to lift the mind from the suffocation of human pressures. The book is illustrated with many full page photographs. One of them, "Galaxy M.31," is good for a first quick notion of deadly depths (and there are deadlier). It is nine million million miles away.

S. S.

AT THE PLAY



The Romanticks (OPEN AIR)
Braziliana (PICCADILLY)

ROSTAND's pretty charade joins *The Tempest* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to complete the alfresco repertory in one of the most

successful Regent's Park years on record, and those who have yet to make an agreeable pilgrimage there this summer can still see one (or all) of the plays before the season ends next month. To go during these shortening evenings has one advantage—that electric light takes over earlier from sunlight, and perversely heightens rather than diminishes the theatrical realities. As for fears of a chill, sixpennyworth of hired blanket takes care of that.

The Romanticks (why was the original "Les Romanesques" ever mistranslated as "The Fantasticks"?) is a guileless tale of young love more plotted against than plotting, though the paternal schemings of Bergamin and Pasquinot are aimed at promoting their son's and daughter's romance, not thwarting it. The fathers, alternately grumping and snivelling or beaming and embracing, according to the author's quick changes from feud to friendship, own adjoining estates separated by a Wall, and when their children, Percinet and Sylvette, are not sighing and swooning over it at the wonder and elusiveness of love, their elders are planning the happiest of endings. Just why a universally desired objective should involve all this stealth would need a ROSTAND to explain, as no doubt he does to a sharp and attentive ear. But if a gust of wind in the trees, or the passing of some anachronistic aircraft overhead, should blot out a link in the plot, it is of no real importance. What

matters is that the story should be carried on, and if a Wall has to be set up in the middle of it for the express purpose of having it removed, who cares? Particularly when the author's contrivances demand the introduction of the splendid, swaggering Straforel, professional abductionist with a tariff of villainy recited with eye-rolling gusto.

Is there a moral? Possibly: that the romantic trappings of love are irrelevant to its emotional reality? That a wall between neighbours is better for neighbourliness than no wall? It doesn't matter. Here is a perfect setting for a piece as light as the leaves that flutter around it, produced with just the right bulge of tongue in cheek by DAVID WILLIAM and ROBERT ATKINS, and played with grace by all concerned. As the children for whom Romeo and Juliet seem by comparison mere nibblers at the grand passion, HILDA SCHRODER and NICHOLAS AMER are properly elated and stricken by turns, and though the author could perhaps have devised more distinction between the fathers' characters, RUSSELL THORNDIKE and Mr. ATKINS round them out with seasoned skill. Over all, in power as well as inches, towers the Straforel of ROBERT EDDISON. There is a sweep and gusto about his frankly bogus villain which sets the evening sizzling.

For anyone who finds the Open Air production too restful for his taste the perfect antidote awaits him at the Piccadilly, where singers and dancers from Rio de Janeiro have returned, for a second time in their five-year world tour, in a riot of colour, din and ritual dancing which must, surely, dislocate necks from time to time among the cast. According to the publicity, *Braziliana* has constantly enjoyed "rave notices emphasizing its novelty and universal appeal." Novelty in the theatre is not a virtue in itself, however, and even the universality of appeal, when the orchestra is strident and the dances at times embarrassing, must be open to question. One item, in which shoe-blacks drift idly into a samba rhythm with their brushes and boot-boxes, has some charm, as well as a shape and development often lacking elsewhere; and, when the cast have their own percussionists on the stage, the integration of the played and danced rhythms is sometimes remarkable; and NELSON FERRAZ sings pleasingly in a purple spotlight. But on the whole a West End theatre ought to do better than this.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

To put a chill in a warm evening, *The Bad Seed* (Aldwych—20/4/55); or some warmth into a cool one, *Kismet* (Stoll—27/4/55). For bigamy, with NIGEL PATRICK and laughter, *The Remarkable Mr. Pennypacker* (New—1/6/55).

J. B. BOOTHROYD



[*The Romanticks*

Straforel—ROBERT EDDISON Pasquinot—RUSSELL THORNDIKE Bergamin—ROBERT ATKINS



AT THE PICTURES

*The Last Command—
The Barefoot Battalion*

"BUT," says an off-screen voice at the beginning of *The Last Command* (Director: FRANK LLOYD)—"But, like to all new people in a new raw land, problems arose." The concurrence of dubious grammar and rhetoric in this observation inclined me quite unreasonably to expect an inflated, second-rate film; but I was surprised. Not that the piece is anything very special, but of its kind (historical spectacular Western) it is good.

This is without the benefit of any of the famous big-screen processes, but with what seemed to me exceptionally pleasing colour: Trucolor, which here gives a clarity and brilliance of definition that I had not realized, or had forgotten, was possible. The story is mainly about Jim Bowie, of bowie-knife fame (pronounced, it seems, *boo*-ie, as I hadn't known before), and the climax is the historic battle of the Alamo in 1836, at which he, like all the other male defenders, died. Before this we have seen the beginnings of the Texan War of Independence against Mexico, and all that led up to the battle; besides a number of subsidiary incidents designed to show how handy Bowie was with his knife as well as with his gun and anything else that offered.

Having determined to stick to the broad lines of history, the script-writer has had to arrange for Bowie to be a sympathetic "character part" (the *Ency. Brit.* says he was a "large, fair, outwardly peaceable man"—just the part for STERLING HAYDEN). This means, as all familiar with the pattern of popular fiction are aware, that things will work out so that wherever he may be at the fade-out, there will be in the foreground a pair of young lovers to whom he has somehow given his blessing.

It is curious to reflect that there must be people for whom the vicissitudes of these young lovers constitute the "story line," all the rest being mere decoration; invited to summarize this piece, they would say it was about a young man called Jeb who was happily able to get the girl in the end because Bowie had considered sent him away from the fort before the battle with a message for Houston. But for most of us the pleasure of all this comes from the wonderfully handled spectacular battle scenes and the well-done period detail of Texas life in the eighteen-thirties. There are several excellent minor players, including J. CARROL NAISH as the Mexican General Santa Anna; and visually, as I have said, the whole thing is notably attractive.

The Barefoot Battalion (Director: GREGG TALLAS) concerns itself with more recent history and on a smaller scale. Greek-made, largely with unprofessional actors, this tells a story of the last war, about one of the bands of boys that



(*The Last Command*)
Davy Crockett—ARTHUR HUNNICUTT

systematically harried the Nazi occupation troops in Athens.

It is told as a flashback to 1943 from 1953, as one of the boys now grown up narrates to a youngster he has seen snatching a bag. Those (this is the perhaps rather unfortunate implication) were the days, when stealing from the authorities was a laudable thing to do. The Barefoot Battalion had a secret headquarters where they practised the technique of, among other things, picking pockets. (Here the old Fagin device of the dummy covered with bells is used—and it is a nice touch that at one point when they should be seriously working with it the boys cannot resist making it the centre of an uproarious game.) Towards the end the film becomes rather over-melodramatized, and much of it is roughly, sometimes crudely made and unevenly lit. But there are plenty of exciting moments and—not merely as an historical sidelight—it was worth doing.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Rififi (13/7/55) and *The Vanishing Prairie* (20/4/55) continue to head the London list. Two more recent ones I found enjoyable: *Not as a Stranger* (10/8/55) and *The Seven Year Itch* (10/8/55).

Releases include *A Kid for Two Farthings* (25/5/55), crowded and full of character, and *The Last Command* (see above).
RICHARD MALLETT

AT THE BALLET

Etudes (FESTIVAL HALL)

The label "Première" attached by the L.C.C. to the first performance by its Festival Ballet of HARALD LANDER's *Etudes* is misleading. This highly professional work danced to CARL CZERNY's well-known exercises, very freely adapted by KNUDAGE REISAGER, was first seen in London last autumn during the memorable visit to Covent Garden of the Paris Opera Ballet. But there is some reason for not recognizing it at first sight. Then, the perfect flowering of a ballerina was traced through a progression which began with a small girl essaying her first steps at the bidding of a formidable ballet-mistress, and ended with a ravishing display of dazzling terpsichorean fireworks by Mlle. MICHELENE BARDIN.

In the present production the charming opening has gone and much else of grace and beauty shed; but there is no parody in displaying practice at the *barre* and the variety and complexity of the school exercises which pave the hard way to lustre in the ballet. Herein Mr. LANDER, who devised the work for the Royal Danish Ballet some ten years ago, shows great ingenuity, for his choreography holds one's interest continuously, though for a shade too long. His skill in building metaphorically on five-finger exercises well matches that of CZERNY in its ringing of the changes on fundamental repetitions. Unfortunately the new presentation last week lacked the polish and timing which are essential when satisfaction of eye and ear depends on co-ordinated precision.

Except for the individual contributions of TONI LANDER, JOHN GILPIN and NICHOLAI POLAJENKO it was all too much like the school-room of reality, until the corps de ballet literally got into its stride with leaping diagonal intersections at top speed. Still, there was nothing, not even the capricious lighting, which further rehearsal could not put right. The work is well suited to the talents of the company and lends itself readily to performance without scenery and on such a shallow platform as that of the Festival Hall.

I grieve to report that the orchestra under GEOFFREY CORBETT took regrettable liberties with the piano-pedagogue's *tempi*. With recollections of childhood thick upon me I felt that at any moment a phantom music-mistress would administer a sharp rap on somebody's knuckles.

Etudes was boisterously received and several times interrupted by the plaudits of the remarkable audience which balled on the South Bank has won for itself.

C. B. MORTLOCK



ON THE AIR

Tears, Idle Tears

THE B.B.C. (Lime Grove dept.) has decided to adopt the American TV favourite "This Is Your Life," and Associated-Rediffusion, one of the big shots of our native commercial system, has signed up Godfrey Wynn. This coming winter is going to test our tear-ducts as never before: every night will be bath-night in suburbia, and by Christmas I expect half the population to be down with lumps in the throat.

Godfrey Wynn, I read, "will have his own 30-minute fortnightly programme, 'Write to Wynn,' in which family problems will be dealt with. Suggested solutions will be re-enacted and the writer of the best problem in each programme will be invited to the studio." According to A-R, Mr. Wynn "already receives an average of 500 problems a week from his readers." It may be doing Mr. Wynn an injustice to suggest that he too will tug at our heartstrings and handkerchiefs: I don't know whether "Write to Wynn" is intended to make us laugh or cry, but I fear the worst. Whenever I hear the words Godfrey and Wynn I reach for my smelling-salts.

The Lime Grove tear-jerker, "This Is Your Life," has already made its bow with a programme of intense lachrymation. I did not see this dummy run in which Eamonn Andrews was suddenly confronted with the *dramatis personae* of a studio autobiography, but it has been reported to me as a howling success—as tearful as "Ask Pickles!" and as "intimate" as "Housewives' Choice."

It is inevitable, I suppose, that people productively concerned with the new medium of entertainment should be anxious to pull out all the stops, to put television through its paces and test its impact on the emotions to breaking-point. The same thing was done to film in its early days, and to literature, music and pictorial art in the years after the



passing of the Education Act of 1870. The danger this time is that the phase of melodramatics will not prove experimental and passing. If advertising creates a popular taste for mush, the stuff may become a standard item in our television diet—just as the sob sisters and cry babies have become permanent institutions in the world of popular music. But we must wait and see.

Michael Pertwee's play *Night Was Our Friend* was just about as unhealthy a brew for a Sunday night as one could imagine. Take fetid jungle, murder, suicide, drink and our old friends the sleeping tablets, mix thoroughly under the moon, and serve with intimations of approaching insanity all round . . . and there you have what *Radio Times* calls "compelling drama." Mr. Pertwee writes nimble dialogue (he is the author of the Grove Family serial) and creates conventional characters with skill and assurance, but his handling of dramatic situations and involved emotional scenes is as yet unconvincing. I suspect that the dilemma of Sally Raynor, saddled with a crazy homicidal husband, a vindictive mother-in-law, a vague lover and an avuncular and sadden family doctor, would have taxed the pen even of Somerset Maugham—and Maugham would have made things easier for himself by setting his story in the Pacific instead of "in a small village in Surrey." Sally was played without conviction by Jill Bennett; Martin, the Dracula-type husband, by Hugh Burden; the stuffy

lover by Michael Ashwin, and Dr. Glanville, puffing and blowing his way through fumes of alcohol, by Maurice Colbourne. It would be unfair to criticize this quartet of competent actors: they did their best in very trying circumstances.

From time to time the newspapers—those addicted to a sensational presentation of current affairs—take a swipe at the B.B.C. for offering unsuitable fare on Sunday nights. They object to religious controversy, crime, jazz, leg-shows—everything, it seems, with the exception of parlour games and attendant décolletage. But there were no objections, so far as I could read, to *Night Was Our Friend*, a piece so morbid that I felt uncomfortable watching it in the company of undergraduates. It was a close night, and I can only suppose that the crusaders of Fleet Street were caught napping in the healthier out-of-doors.

From October onwards the viewers are promised a nightly ration of variety, or rather *two* nightly rations. The B.B.C. has decided that a little of what we fancy (according to Listener Research) will keep our sets tuned to Lime Grove and prevent mass desertion to the I.T.A. Well, so far so good; anything is preferable to parlour games. But I have grave doubts whether the ration can be met without resorting to telefilm. Recent editions of "Showcase," "Garrison Theatre," "Music Hall" and "Café Continental" have been achingly thin. Variety is now unvaried in composition, the merest dash of home-made humour competing with buckets of transatlantic patter and glamour. My recent remarks on this theme have brought me several letters from American sufferers, one of whom uses strong language and provides a suitable tail-piece for this article. "The abysmal bilge that exudes from our television stations," he writes, "is now to be piped into British homes. Isn't progress marvellous!"

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

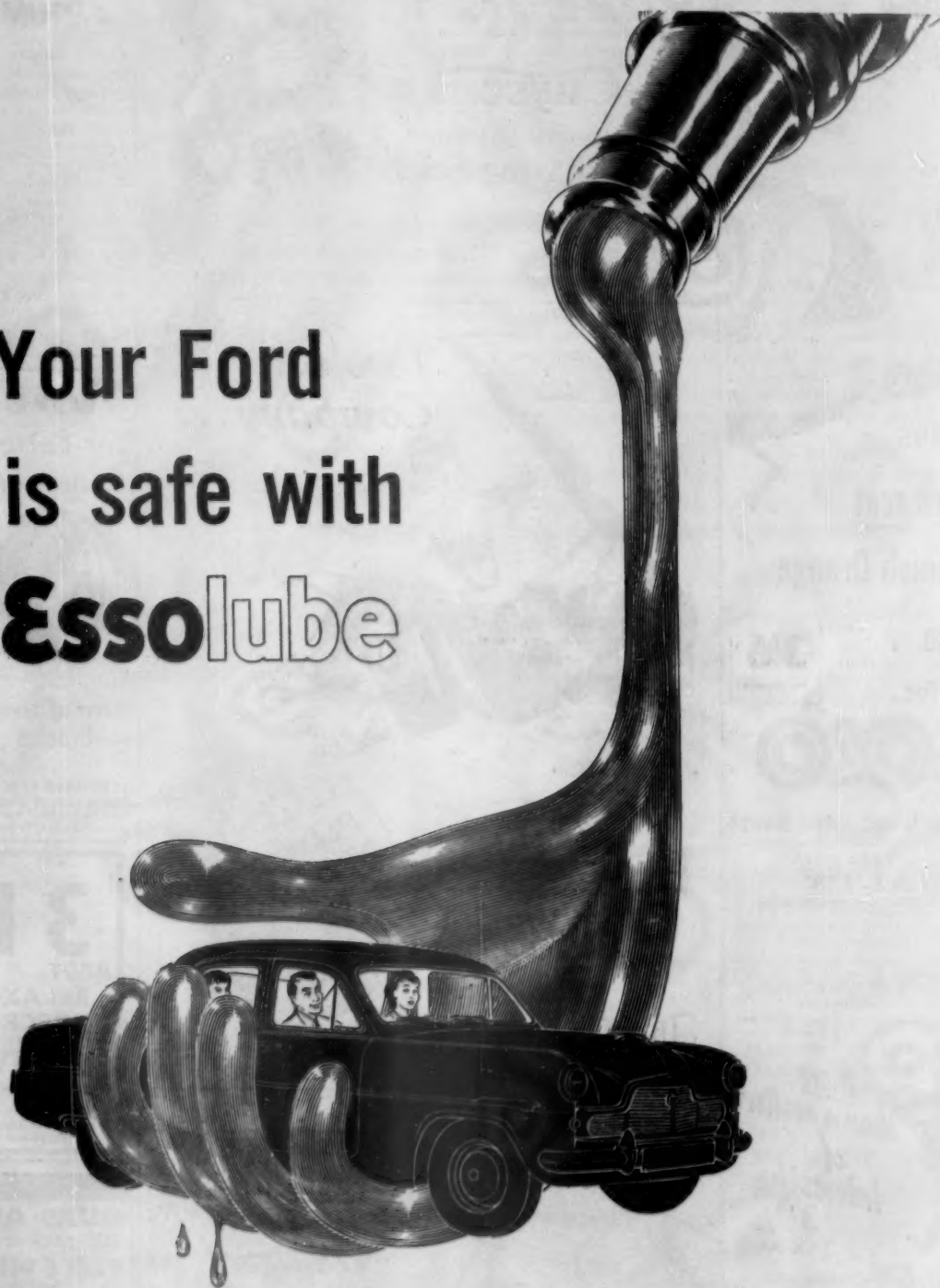


NOTICE.—Contributions requiring an answer should be accompanied by a stamped and addressed envelope. The entire copyright in all Articles, Sketches, Drawings, etc., published in PUNCH is specifically reserved to the Proprietors throughout the countries signatory to the BERNE CONVENTION, the U.S.A., and the Argentine. Reproductions or imitations of any of these are therefore expressly forbidden. The Proprietors will always consider requests from contributors for permission to reprint. CONDITIONS OF SALE AND SUPPLY.—This periodical is sold subject to the following conditions, namely, that it shall not, without the written consent of the publishers first given, be lent, resold, hired out or otherwise disposed of by way of Trade, except at the full retail price of 6d.; and that it shall not be lent, resold, hired out or otherwise disposed of in a mutilated condition or in any unauthorized cover by way of Trade or affixed to or as part of any publication or advertising, literary or pictorial matter whatsoever.

Reg'd at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper. Entered as 2nd-class Mail Matter at the New York, N.Y. P.O. 1903. Postage of this issue: Gt. Britain and Ireland 11d.; Canada 1d.; Elsewhere Overseas 11d. Post Wrapper top left-hand corner "Canadian Magazine Post." Printed Papers—Reduced Rate.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES—Yearly, including Extra Numbers and Postage: Inland 30/-; Overseas 35/- (U.S.A., 35.00); Canada 34/- or 35.00.

Your Ford is safe with **Essolube**



Every minute of unnecessary wear on pistons and valves robs you of engine-efficiency that no amount of extra care can replace. To make sure your engine is giving you its top performance, and that heat, and wear, and sludge are not cheating you of horsepower, see that it is kept cool, clean and contented by Essolube's tough-but-gentle protective film. You safeguard your engine's power and your own driving enjoyment, too, when you choose — **Essolube** THE TOP QUALITY MOTOR OIL

SEÑOR
SOLO
SAYS ...



SOLO
means
more real
Spanish Orange
juice.

ask for ...

SOLO

and you'll get—the Best!

**HOTEL PHOENICIA
MALTA**

For a sunny Mediterranean holiday
(in sterling area)
FIRST CLASS CUISINE AND ACCOMMO-
DATION AT SURPRISINGLY ECONOMICAL
RATES

Bathing, Motor Yacht Picnic, Water Skiing and
Schnorkelling, Dancing, Bridge, Private Cinema.
Membership of social and sports clubs arranged.
Rates and brochure on request. Ask your Travel
Agent or phone GLEKARD 6477.



More
than a matter
of
Interest!
3½%
TAX PAID

Equals over 6% To the Investor

Subject to Tax at 6/6 in the £
EASY WITHDRAWAL

NO FEES OR CHARGES DAY-TO-DAY INTEREST
NO DEPRECIATION

**AMALGAMATED GENERAL
BUILDING SOCIETY**

Head Office:
36, BRUTON STREET, LONDON, W.1.
Mayfair 1814

Branches:
107, DALE END, BIRMINGHAM, 4.
53, KING STREET, MANCHESTER, 1.

Truly an Imperial Lather!

It's good to feel Imperial—to
have a lather so bland that even
a stiff beard must soften and
make way for a feeling of
confidence and well-being.



In plastic case 2/- In carton 1/3

FROM ALL GOOD SHOPS

CUSSONS OF 84 BROOK ST, GROSVENOR SQ, LONDON W1



Two's
Company...

with
**PLAYER'S
No 3**



The Quality Cigarette

[3P 126]

NOTHING BEATS

**FLIT
AEROSOL**

IT'S NEW!
IT'S QUICK!



ANOTHER **Esso** PRODUCT
NEW PRICES 5/3 6/6 10/6

5 SECONDS SPRAYING KILLS ALL INSECTS!

Take
**Dr. BRIGHTON'S
AUTUMN TONIC**

There's nothing
better for health
and spirits than a
holiday now with
Doctor Brighton.



Fog-free down-
land air, sun-
shine and sea breezes,
London shows, Southern Philharmonic
concerts, five golf courses, handsome
shops—they "take you out of yourself"
and send you home feeling really fine.

Send for free booklet and Hotel
Accommodation List, post free from:—
G. J. BUTTERWORTH,
Royal York Buildings, Brighton.

Vent-Axia
for Better Air
Conditions



IN INDUSTRY
IN COMMERCE
IN AGRICULTURE
IN THE HOME

Simplest
form of controlled
ventilation



VENT-AXIA LTD. 9 VICTORIA ST., S.W.1.
ABBEY 6441 (7 lines) AND AT GLASGOW,
MANCHESTER, BIRMINGHAM, BRISTOL,
LEEDS, NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE.

The
3 R's

REST
RELAXATION and
RECREATION

under ideal conditions.

**SMEDLEY'S HYDRO
MATLOCK Derbyshire**

Open till Mid-September

The Booklet of Smedley's will be gladly sent
on application to—THE MANAGER

OURS ALONE?

YES, FACE IT:

FOR 5 MINUTES!

We must fight the Fire
Fiend ALONE before the
Fire Brigade gets here. Please
send details of NU-SWIFT rapid
and reliable Fire Extinguishers—
BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE!

Name

Address

Post to Nu-Swift Ltd. 25 Piccadilly W.1.

In Every Ship of the Royal Navy

Drawing from life of a man who wasn't born yesterday, specially commissioned by the House of Whitbread from

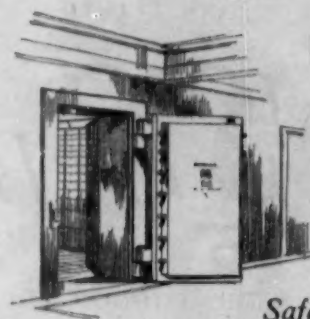
H.A. Freeth



"Ask for two light ales? Not me!
I know what my friends like
—and I know what they're getting
when I call for

WHITBREAD

the superb Pale Ale



**MIDLAND
BANK**

*introduces a
Safe Deposit Service
at Pall Mall*

AT THE PALL MALL BRANCH you may rent a private safe in the specially-constructed strong room. The contents are accessible to no one but yourself and the safe can be visited at any time during normal business hours. This service, available to customers and non-customers alike, provides at modest cost a greater security for your possessions. A postcard or telephone call to the Manager will bring you an illustrated descriptive leaflet.

MIDLAND BANK LIMITED

PALL MALL BRANCH: 69 PALL MALL, LONDON, S.W. 1
Telephone: Regent 8060



a clear case for

Cash's

WOVEN NAME TAPES

CASH'S OF COVENTRY

This fine British Cigar, introduced many years ago, is more popular than ever today.

**CARASABA
INTERMEZZOS**

Elegant shape
54 inches long,
as illustrated.

Delicate aroma and
charming flavour

A Sample Box of
25 for 42/- post paid.

GREENS LTD.,

Wine and Cigar Merchants
34 Royal Exchange,
Cornhill, London, E.C.3

IN-TURKEY, THE NEW



*Istanbul
Hilton*

overlooking the
Bosphorus 300
rooms with the
high Hilton stan-
dards



Consult your Travel Agent or write direct to:

HILTON HOTELS INTERNATIONAL
3, rue de Stockholm - PARIS-8

Telephone: LABORDE 57-50



An Irish Coxswain



Three
quarters
of
A
MILLION
POUNDS

—that is the cost, each year, of the Lifeboat Service: and it must be met entirely from voluntary contributions. Yours, however small, will help: send it to

**ROYAL NATIONAL
LIFE-BOAT INSTITUTION**
42, GROSVENOR GARDENS, LONDON, S.W.1

Treasurer:

His Grace The Duke of Northumberland
Secretary:

Col. A. D. Burnett Brown, O.B.E., R.C., T.D., R.A.

BURMA CHERROOTS

'Call of the East'

Length 4"

Trial Box of 25

37/6

post free

Imported
direct from
the native makers.

GREENS LTD

Wine & Cigar Merchants

34 Royal Exchange, LONDON, E.C.1.
May we quote you for your Wine, Spirit and
Cigar requirements?

ROSS'S Belfast Soda Water

For the connoisseur, the touch of perfection

Here is today's
finest value in
grass cutters

This 24" Rotary Motor Scythe, operated by 4-stroke engine, works fast and efficiently. Available with the following attachments: Generator for working hedge trimmer, Pump and Spray Unit, "Leafeta" for clearing fallen leaves.

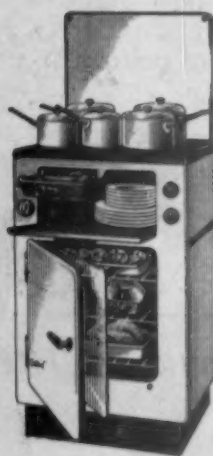


PRICE
of Motor Scythes
only
£48.15.0

Hayter
MOTOR SCYTHE

HAYTERS of SPELLBROOK
Specialists in Modern Methods of Grass Cutting
17 Spellbrook Lane, Bishop's Stortford, Herts.

FLOODLIT VISIBLE COOKING



The Belling "Streamline" is superb both in appearance and performance. It has a full-size inner glass door which takes all the guesswork out of cooking. Moreover, the oven is automatically floodlit when the outer door is open so that you really can see what's cooking! Automatic oven control. Extra large oven—clear cooking space 15" w. x 13" d. x 16" h. Automatic simmering controls on grill boiler and 2 boiling plates. Fold-down hob cover forms useful table top. Available on wheels for easy cleaning 60/- extra. Only **£52.10.0**

ATTRACTIVE H.P. TERMS AVAILABLE
Immediate Delivery
from your Electrical Shop or Showroom

FREE! Write to Belling & Co. Ltd. Bridge Works, Enfield, Middx., for 64-page colour catalogue of Belling electric fires and cookers—it's full of useful information about electricity in the home.

you can't beat a
"Belling"

CBCL59

Simpkin's

PIONEERS OF

Quality

GLUCOSE
SWEETS

AND

VITA GLUCOSE

FROM QUALIFIED CHEMISTS EVERYWHERE



The Treasured Gift

Sophos CRESTED CUFF LINKS

Highly polished and heavily Gold Cased, with Crest and Colours of any Club, School, O.B. Association, Regiment, etc., faithfully reproduced in exact detail in coloured enamels. Each pair in presentation case. Any one of over 800 designs in production... 50/-. Obtainable from all leading Men's Wear shops, and some Jewellers.

A product of Lambournes (B'ham) Ltd.

GODFREY DAVIS

Europe's first name in Car Hire

CAR HIRE

TARIFF 1. TIME and MILEAGE

TARIFF 2. NO MILEAGE CHARGE

Whichever is cheaper

For full details of Self-drive and Chauffeur-driven service, write, call or telephone:—

7 ECCLESTON STREET, LONDON, S.W.1.

(Telephone: SLOano 0022)

Or Neasden Lane, London, N.W.10. (GLAdstone 6474)

LONDON PARIS

In Paris

S.F.L. GODFREY DAVIS

99 Avenue de Neuilly,
Neuilly-Sur-Seine,
(Tel: SABLons 98-13)

Tricker's

BENCH MADE SHOES



Obtainable from
appointed stockists
— there is one in your
district. Write or call
at our Showrooms for catalogue.

TRICKERS, 67 JERMYN ST., PICCADILLY, LONDON SW1 OT 4 OLD JEWRY, CHEAPSIDE, LONDON EC3

Styles
for town
and
country
wear

M-W 50



"Yes, he said
I needn't take
on extra staff
after all..."

"YOU KNOW when our orders were going up and up? Our accountant told me we might have to take on more staff. So we decided to call in the Burroughs man. It couldn't do any harm and his advice was free... As it is, I'm more than glad. He went into the details with our accountant, then showed us how we could mechanize our accounting at low cost—and save a lot of overtime. He certainly knew his job..."

The Burroughs man is always at your disposal without cost. He is an experienced adviser on all accounting and record-keeping systems, and well qualified to work in co-operation with your accountant and auditor.

He has a complete knowledge of mechanized accounting. But he won't propose changing your accounting methods just to suit certain machines. Rather, after a full analysis of your

problem, he will make proposals for a rapid, economical and *workable* solution.

If he does recommend a new system, he will prepare a detailed plan for it and help you get it working smoothly. He will make sure you continue to get *full* benefit from any Burroughs machine you install.

Whatever your business, large or small—if you have an accounting problem, the Burroughs man can help you solve it. Burroughs make the world's widest range of Adding, Calculating, Accounting, Billing and Statistical Machines and Microfilm Equipment. Call in the Burroughs man as soon as you like—you're committed to nothing and his advice is free. You'll find the number of your nearest Burroughs office in your local telephone book. Burroughs Adding Machine Ltd., Avon House, 356-366 Oxford Street, London, W.1.

FOR EXPERT ADVICE ON BUSINESS SYSTEMS

CALL IN THE **Burroughs MAN**



One Burroughs man solved this problem. The Phonotas Co. Ltd. (weekly telephone cleaning and sterilizing service) have 80,000 separate accounts; until recently, in London and in provincial offices, figures were copied by hand. As this led to errors and delays, they called in this Burroughs man, Mr. J. G. Winterbottom (left). He showed Phonotas how, with two typewriter-accounting machines, and two abbreviated-description accounting machines, they could halve their accounting time, and obtain up-to-date figures—all without extra staff



Whatever shape your pipe—
FILL IT WITH



CAPSTAN

MEDIUM NAVY CUT TOBACCO

It's good! It's sure to be—it's made by Wills.

4/6d. an ounce; 2 oz. airtight tin 9/1d.
Also supplied in Full Strength.

CT.6C

There is only one

LILLET

*Le Meilleur
APERITIF
de la France*



Now available in half bottles

*Jack Train,
Nigel Patrick,
Richard Murdoch
hear some good news!*



**"Jack, for a close shave you want
'Philishave' Rotary Action"**

says Leslie Mitchell

"Honestly, chaps, this Rotary Action makes such a difference."

"But what is Rotary Action, Leslie?"

"Well, instead of the usual to-and-fro business you get with most dry shavers, the 'Philishave' blades rotate."

"What's the idea of that?"

"Well, for one thing, it means you get off *all* the hairs—which-ever way they're growing. But that's not all. While the blades rotate, the 'Philishave' stretches your skin. So you shave right down at skin-level."

"And does your skin like that?"

"Loves it! You couldn't have



a more comfortable shave. Tell you what, Jack. I'll bring my 'Philishave' along tomorrow, then you can try it for yourself."

"Very good of you, old man. I don't mind if I do."

**PHILIPS
PHILISHAVE**



THE DRY SHAVER WITH THE BIGGEST WORLD SALE
Philips Electrical Ltd. Century House, Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W C2
(P6603F)

Handsome hair when you check Dry Scalp

It's goodbye to good grooming when you suffer from Dry Scalp.

Check Dry Scalp by stimulating the flow of natural scalp oils with just a few drops of 'Vaseline' Brand Hair Tonic, massaged gently into the scalp for twenty seconds daily. This easy treatment will soon give your hair that natural, healthy, well-groomed look.

There's no spirit or other drying ingredient in this blend of pure natural oils. That's why 'Vaseline' Hair Tonic can check Dry Scalp and really groom your hair at the same time. Buy a bottle today—it costs only 2/6, or 3/9 for double the quantity.



Vaseline® HAIR TONIC

The dressing that checks Dry Scalp

*Vaseline® is the registered trade mark of the Chesebrough Mfg. Co. Ltd.

6796-15

the "smallest room" needs the
strongest
cleaner

—every single day!



Every day, your "smallest room" needs a cleaner *strong* enough to scour right round the S-bend, killing germs and biting into stains!

Harpic is made specially strong to do just this job. Just a sprinkle every night keeps the bowl gleaming white—safely, without harming the porcelain. Also, Harpic deodorizes and freshens the whole room. There are two sizes of Harpic — 1/6 & 2/6.

HARPIC
PERFUMED OR PLAIN

**specially strong
and safe
for the lavatory**

Reckitt & Co. Ltd., Mfg.



IN THE CAUSE of ROAD SAFETY....



get a **BRAKE CHECK LOG BOOK** from your **LOCAL GIRLING SERVICE AGENT** and have your brakes....
CHECKED REGULARLY

GIRLING

THE BEST BRAKES IN THE WORLD

Way Out Ahead →

GIRLING LIMITED
KINGS ROAD,
TYNSELEY,
BIRMINGHAM, 11



for **PICNICS**
SUMMERY
SANDWICHES and
DAINTY SNACKS

IT'S DELICIOUS

ANY TIME IS THE RIGHT TIME FOR

MACVITA

BRITAIN'S FINEST CRISP BREAD

MCVITTIE & PRICE LTD., MAKERS OF THE WORLD FAMOUS DIGESTIVE (SWEET MEAL) BISCUITS
EDINBURGH · LONDON · MANCHESTER



The original FOUR SQUARE Vintage Blends are back!

DOBIE OF PAISLEY are pleased to announce that their Original Vintage Blends are available to discerning pipe smokers once again.

Four Square Tobaccos are back to pre-war quality, free from stalk and manufactured with the inherited skill of the master-craftsmen who have served the independent House of Dobie for 150 years. In spite of rising costs and the use of none but the most costly grades of leaf, they are still the least expensive of good tobaccos.

Four Square smokers of long standing will remember their pre-war qualities and be anxious to smoke them again—but to the post-war pipe man, Four Square Vintage Blends will come as a new and delightful experience.

Ask for the blend of your choice by colour :

RED ::

Finest Virginia tobacco in broken flake form

BLUE ::

An aromatic blend of pure Virginia and Oriental leaf
each of the above 4/7½d per 1 oz. vacuum tin

YELLOW ::

A choice blend of Virginia-type tobaccos in broken
flake form

GREEN ::

A rich, satisfying blend of fine Oriental and

BROWN ::

A ready-rubbed fine-cut, toasted to a rich dark brown

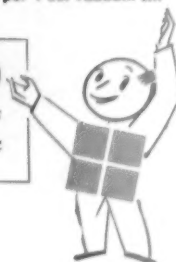
PURPLE ::

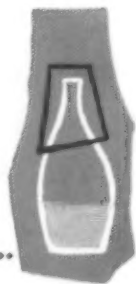
Small discs of spun tobacco, each a complete blend
each of the above four 4/3½d per 1 oz. vacuum tin

VACUUM PACKED

In 1 oz. and 2 oz. tins

—Fresh for the pipe





Some Unilever savings

** quoted by*

SIR GEOFFREY HEYWORTH

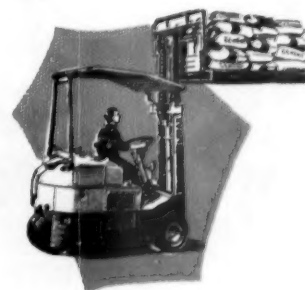
".... In the United Kingdom, after the war, when we re-examined our distribution methods in Unilever, we decided to exploit this new* system of handling wherever possible, and to replace those main depots which could not be adapted to use it....Six of these new depots have already been built; a further nine are in the process of construction and sites for seven more are being sought. Their individual cost varies from £85,000 to £300,000, but the amounts invested show a good return. In one depot, which cost £200,000 to build, we have reduced our handling and storage costs by £21,000 a year, - indicating an equivalent yield of over 10% on the investment. These economies are typical of our experience....."

** Fork lift Trucks and Pallets*

FORK LIFT TRUCKS are made by

Coventry Climax

** At the Annual General Meeting of UNILEVER LTD.*



Coventry Climax Engines Ltd.
Dept. A · Coventry